50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 1996

Celebrates 50 Years of Covering Princeton

by Jeb Stuart

This is an honest, but probably not 100 percent accurate, account of the 50-year history of Town Topics. The basic facts are correct, but no doubt it contains a few inaccuracies here and there. The writer, who was five going on six at the beginning, asks your forgiveness. With the help of Mary C. Coyle, wife of the late Dan D. Coyle, one of the paper's founders, he has tried to piece together the early years.

You might say Town Topics began in a couple of briefcases, carried around Princeton early in 1946 by brothers-in-law Dan Coyle and Don Stuart. The concept for a weekly newspaper had taken root in their minds sometime before World War II. Don, a 1935 graduate of Princeton, and Dan, class of 1938, had both done plenty of newspaper work as undergraduates and afterwards.

When Dan went off to serve in the Army during the war, the plans were put on hold. When it ended, they revived the idea, put together a few sample issues and went around town to measure the interest. In those days just a walk down Nassau Street visiting the stores, owned by local merchants, was all that was needed.

The business district was confined to the Borough. The Township had a police station, a few residential streets, a couple of bars and gas stations, lumber and coal yards, and vast open spaces. The Princeton Shopping Center and numerous housing developments were still in the future.

Princeton was a small town in those days, not quite one where you knew everyone, but with a population of less than 10,000, it was a closely knit community. Central to the idea of starting a newspaper in town — there were already two, the then weekly Princeton Packet and the semi-weekly Princeton Herald — was the plan to cover the entire Borough and Township with a single means of communication. Thus the idea of a free circulation newspaper was embraced, which the editors felt would particularly appeal to potential advertisers and set Town Topics apart from the competition.

Town Topics

WE NOMINATE

Sixteen hundred and twenty-five Princetonians gave of themselves in World War II, as this nation and its Allies fought to substitute a reign of law for a reign of war. From August 7, 1942, when the First Marines rode landing craft onto the sloping beaches of Guadalcanal, until the Atomic Age was born in flames over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Princeton citizens in the Armed Forces helped write chapter after chapter of the ever-widening offensives that reduced the enemy to helpless-ness. North Africa, Sicily, Italy, New Guinea, the Pacific's barren atolls, the beaches of Normandy, Southern France, the Philippines, the Rhine, Okinawa: in all parts of the world Princetonians fought. Thirty-eight of them died. In all humility, knowing full well that intimate griefs cannot be shared, the community feels a common loss and a continuing common pride in the bravery and sacrifice of those who gave their lives.

On the 1,587 residents of the Borough and Township —who have come back to the ways of peace with gum memories of the ways of war—falls the burden of helping provide the community leadership needed in meeting the challenges of peace. That former servicemen and servicewomen are making places for themselves in the peacetime sun is reflected by the growing number of veterans engaged in the town's business enterprises, in its political life, in its service organizations. With the Home Front of World War II, without which there could have been no final victory, Princeton's veterans are bridging the gap between reconversion and the normalcy of a world at peace—in spite of international bad tempers, dismaying uncertainty in national affairs, housing shortages and rising prices.

For their sacrifices in the past, for their courage and vigor in adjusting to the present, for their determination to keep faith with the ideals which they have served so long and so well, we in this first issue of TOWN TOPICS name them

PRINCETON'S
MEN AND WOMEN OF THE WEEK
March 17-23, 1946

The response from store owners was positive, and on Friday, March 15, 1946 the Princeton Post Office delivered approximately 3,400 copies to homes and businesses in town. The first issue certainly did not resemble a typical newspaper format. It wasn't the conventional broadsheet size, and it wasn't a tabloid either. It was printed on both sides of a piece of paper 10" wide by 32" long, folded together like an oversized railroad timetable.

Its front page consisted of a feature that Dan Coyle would write faithfully every week for the next quarter century. An article called "We Nominate" chose a person or persons who deserved recognition for his or her achievements. Nominated for the first issue were the 1,625 Princetonians (men and women) who had been involved in World War II, 38 of whom had died.

The first issue contained about 70 inches of news, such as a delay in ground-breaking for the Stanworth apartments on Bayard Lane, reviews of movies at the town's two theatres (The Playhouse and Garden), a Calendar of the Week, a very brief sports column and 150 inches of ads. It made a profit for its owners, but not so big a profit that they were about to leave their regular jobs. Dan Coyle was employed by the University in the Office of Public Information, while Don Stuart worked at the Princeton Film Center.

Initially, there was no Town Topics office. The advertising and editorial work were carried around in two briefcases and delivered regularly to the Princeton Herald, which printed the paper in its Chambers Street building between the Tuesday and Friday issues of its own publication.

Mary Coyle (Dan's wife) was soon drafted to handle billing out of their home at 85 South Stanworth Drive; while Cissy Stuart (Don's wife and also Mary's sister) helped out on publication days. In a year or two, when the Princeton Post Office required labels be put on the papers, an addressograph machine was moved into the basement of the Stuart home at 15 Maple Street.

Sometime after its first issue, Town Topics found a presence on Nassau Street. Western Union (the current Hamilton Jewelers building at the corner of Nassau and Witherspoon Streets) had a vacant office, and Don Stuart was given the use of a desk there. Down Nassau Street, Hinksons served as an unofficial drop off spot for news or ads.

The paper grew in popularity with advertisers and its readers, tripling its size between 1946 and 1949. More advertisers came on board, and the news coverage of the town increased. The first Town Topics Christmas Appeal was made to residents in December, 1947. It asked for $200 to help a needy family in town — the generous response brought in more than $1,000.

In 1949, the paper's size grew to the point where it was printed on actual newsprint for the first time, and the timetable format gave way to a small tabloid size. This meant more writing as well as more ad sales. Coordinating all this from three or four spots around town

Continued on Next Page

• *INSIDE: Kay Bretnall, Ace Bushnell and Barbara Johnson reminisce about Princeton and Town Topics.*
• *INSIDE: A look at some early advertisers still in business here a half century later.*

• *INSIDE: Princeton house for $20,000; New Year's Eve at "The Nass" for $6; and other late '40's ads.*
• *INSIDE: A look at some of the major (and not so major) stories Town Topics covered in its early years.*

TT History

Continued from Preceding Page

was not easy, and by 1950 the editors had begun searching for suitable office space.

Princeton University had part of a first floor for rent in a three-story brick building at 4 Mercer Street, and that year Town Topics moved into the only home it has ever known. At that point, Don Stuart left the Film Center and began to devote himself full time to Town Topics. Dan Coyle kept his job at the University, but continued to contribute much of his free time and to write his weekly "We Nominate."

With an office that customers could walk into anytime, and a telephone that began to ring more and more frequently, it became apparent to the Coyles and the Stuarts that the four of them couldn't continue to put out a newspaper alone. As it is today for all newspapers, advertising was key to growth and help was needed to sell ads to local stores. Adra Fairman, wife of the late Ken Fairman, former Director of Athletics at Princeton University, became Town Topics' first employee and eventually its first advertising manager.

True Dedication

Almost before she knew it, Mary Coyle found herself managing an increasingly busy office at 4 Mercer Street, where she would spend a large part of her life for the next two decades. Even at home she and Dan Coyle were often on duty.

Home for the Coyles was now a University-owned house at 11 University Place, conveniently right behind the office. In a true moment of dedication or perhaps weakness (and long before answering machines), the Coyles agreed to share their phone number with Town Topics. Now the paper was reachable 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At first, it seemed worthwhile to take a classified ad during dinner hour, or listen to an idea for a potential news story at 8 on a Sunday night, but eventually the Coyles began to say the office was closed. To those callers who persisted, Dan Coyle would explain that he was just the cleaning man thus unable to be of help.

Soon Mary had much needed extra help with the phone at 4 Mercer Street — much needed because she was on call for more than just the newspaper. The Town Topics building had been Priest's Pharmacy, and elderly Mrs. Priest continued to live in an apartment upstairs. Once in a while, her nurse would call down to say that Mrs. Priest had fallen out of bed and that Mary was needed to lift her back in.

Other employees were hired as well. The first reporter came in the early 50's. Then in 1953 Kay Bretnall answered an ad to write "it's New to Us." Before long she was helping out one day a week in the office and writing news stories. She became a full-time reporter in 1959, and by her retirement in 1984, her career at Town Topics had spanned 31 years.

IN THE BEGINNING: Town Topics' founders Dan Coyle (left) and Don Stuart wrote all the copy and sold all the ads for their timetable-sized publication.

Again the paper grew, from four to five columns in 1953, and in the process outgrew the presses at the Princeton Herald. The decision was made to print in Mount Holly, about 30 miles south of Princeton. It wasn't ideal, but the price and everything else was right.

Meet Me in Mercerville

However, instead of merely taking editorial and advertising matter to Chambers Street, it now had to be delivered to Sleeper Publications, at the Mount Holly Herald. To keep this material steadily flowing, Cissy Stuart soon found herself driving every Monday and Tuesday afternoon to an Esso Service Station located at the Five Corners in Mercerville.

There she would meet a messenger from the press, and exchange new for earlier copy already set in type and ready to be proofed. Don Stuart spent Wednesdays and Thursdays at this press, directing the make-up of the paper, until finally driving a station wagon back to Princeton with the copies inside. Eventually the size of the paper brought a delivery truck onto the scene.

There wasn't enough time to drive everywhere, so the buses to and from Trenton became part of the messenger service. Pictures in these days had to be engraved, and the photoengraving shop was in Trenton. On Mondays and Tuesdays, pictures to be engraved were put on the bus when it stopped on Nassau Street across from Town Topics. They would be engraved that day, and the metal plates returned by the late afternoon bus.

More than once, with the hectic pace of a Monday or Tuesday, someone would forget to meet the 4:45 bus. That meant jumping in a car to chase it down Nassau Street, honking the horn until the driver pulled over.

Throughout the rest of the 1950's and early 1960's, the paper grew until it reached the six-column format it has today. The circulation also grew gradually to 14,000,

Continued on Page 25

How to Enjoy Spring in Princeton

Those delightful Spring days for which Princeton is famous are on their way. When the temperature soars upward, stop in at our soda fountain for a frosted drink or a cool, fresh sundae. It's one of Princeton's favorite forms of relaxation!

RENWICK'S

50 Nassau Street

N. C. Jefferson

PLUMBING • HEATING • AIR CONDITIONING

190 Witherspoon Street • Princeton • 609-924-0762

which has served Princeton's Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning Needs Since 1947

takes pleasure in congratulating another old-timer in town...

TOWN TOPICS

on its 50th Anniversary

(We must be doing something right!)

Nassau Interiors

Since 1947

FINE FURNITURE • INTERIOR DESIGN

Custom Draperies • Carpet/Custom Rugs
Slipcovers • Re-Upholstery
Fine Lamps & Accessories

162 Nassau St • Princeton • 924-2561

Monday-Friday 9-5:30; Thurs 'til 8; Sat 'til 5; Sun 12-4

Kay Bretnall Remembers Princeton 50 Years Ago

by Katharine H. Bretnall

I remember that when I was a reporter, I kept the first person singular locked up tight in my typewriter (yes, we all used typewriters in 1946) yet here I am, 50 years after Town Topics was founded, telling you through my word-processsor, what "I" remember about the Princeton of '46 and how "I" think it compares to what it is today.

I wasn't part of the staff in '46, but when I joined in the early '50s, Princeton wasn't much different from what it had been six years before.

Two things have changed radically since then. They are the first things you'd notice if you dropped in today after a half-century's absence:

Traffic. Dense, clotted, heavy, slow. Charlie Agle, an architect sadly no longer among us, warned that traffic on Nassau Street would once be EVERY DAY the way it was the Saturday of the Yale game. Oh, Charlie, Charlie! How little we heeded ye!

Stores. Where are the stores of yesteryear? I won't name them all — it would take too long, but just a few? Clayton's, Skirm's Smoke Shop, The Book Mart, Bellows, The Balt, Viedt's, Renwick's..... And here are some questions asked by a youth of today's 1996 Princeton:

"Daddy, what's a '**Balt?**'"

"It's 'THE Balt,' my child, because that place was unique. It was a huge cafeteria, where Hinkson's now is, white-tiled throughout like a — well, white-tiled. You could get a good meal for a small piece of change. Good talk, too. Basically, it was a male undergraduate hangout but a townie or a female was never turned away."

"Mother, what do you mean '**Playhouse**' — a little thing you had in the backyard?"

"No, indeed! It was THE movie theatre, built in Colonial style on Hulfish North where there is now an office building and a Gap for Kids. It was where you saw Clark Gable and Joan Crawford and 'Lawrence of Arabia.' Your father and I had our first date there, and then we went up to Renwick's — where LaVake's Jewelry is, now — for ice-cream."

"Somebody told me there was a schoolhouse on Nassau. That isn't true, is it?"

"It certainly is! Nassau Street Elementary School — that impressive stone pile at the head of Moore Street, where the University now has its Visual Arts program. Some tense soccer games were fought on the playing fields behind that building — kids in gym uniforms, of course, and boys and girls in separate gym classes. The playground is a parking lot now."

"What does '**Gasoline Alley**' mean?"

"Why, along Nassau roughly between Olden and Murray, you had Sunoco, Gulf, Sinclair, Mobil, Texaco. Only Sunoco and Gulf now."

In 1963, *Town Topics* ran an Almanac for Newcomers that described the town: ..."a unified community built around the learning process," the writer pontificated, trying to avoid the word "intellectual." And, basically, it still is.

"...still is," except that there is more of everything: more traffic lights ... more Chinese restaurants ... more pizzerias ... more little places where you can drop in for a snack and a cup of coffee....

"Growth" has always been a word that makes Princeton residents shiver. But look at what's been built in the last half-century and the list doesn't even include all Princeton's campuses:

- The Public Library: (Remember when the entire library — the WHOLE library! — was in charming little Bainbridge House, next to the Garden movie theatre?)
- The Princeton Shopping Center.
- Additions to Princeton Hospital.
- John Witherspoon School.
- Bike paths.
- Housing: Starting in 1938 with Franklin Terrace, then Maple, Clay, Lloyd, Redding, PCV, Elm, Griggs, Washington Oaks — for people who haven't yet made it into the half-mil. housing bracket.
- The swimming pool complex.

And who would have thought it! Princeton's main post office in West Windsor, for goodness' sake!

Do the same kinds of people still live here? By and large, yes. The Almanac writer remarked that "high fashion (in a woman) is a sign that one's mind is not on the serious side of life." Still true.

Italian-Americans were described as Princeton's largest non-Anglo Saxon group, and since then, of course, this heritage has been saluted in lovely Pettoranello Gardens, bordering Mountain Avenue. A half-century ago, one said "Negro." There was an agonized shift to "black" and now an accepted term is often "African-American" but terminology doesn't seem an issue. In 1963, when this Almanac was written, over half of Princeton's households, representing 75% of those queried, signed an "open housing" statement supporting integrated housing. Today, residents of Hispanic ancestry are an ever-growing group. How many Guatemalans lived in Princeton in 1946!

I used the word "agonized." Oh, the issues that have drawn Princeton blood! "If we build a swimming pool, 'THEY' will swim in it!"

"Housing? Not in my back yard!"

"Let's keep Princeton PRINCETON!"

"A separate Township high school? I'm not going to pay for it!"

"Merge Borough and Township school systems? Over my dead body!"

And always, ever and eternally — consolidation of Borough and Township into a single governmental entity. (Seen your local paper lately? About every 20 years, consolidation dominates the news. Rejected in the '50s, rejected again in the '70s. In the '90s ???)

All these years, as true today as in '46, Princeton has been run by men and women who are, in essence, volunteers. (Would you have guessed, in '46, that Borough and Township would eventually have two black mayors and three women mayors, one in

Continued on Next Page

31 YEARS AT TOWN TOPICS: She came in 1953, she left in 1984, and in between Kay Bretnall wrote about the news in this town with a style and accuracy that gained the respect of everyone.

Trousseau Lovelies
for the
Bride-to-be

Bert-Ann, Inc.
Lingerie

230 Nassau Street Telephone 1301

Catering to Princeton
for more than ten years

simply better...
Main Street
CATERING
609.921.2777

Since We Ran This Ad in 1947
We Have Placed
Over 2,500 More in Town Topics

HULIT'S HAS SLIPPERS FOR EVERYONE!

CHILDREN'S (size 4 up) ..... $1.95 up
WOMEN'S ..... $1.95 up
MEN'S ..... $3.95 up

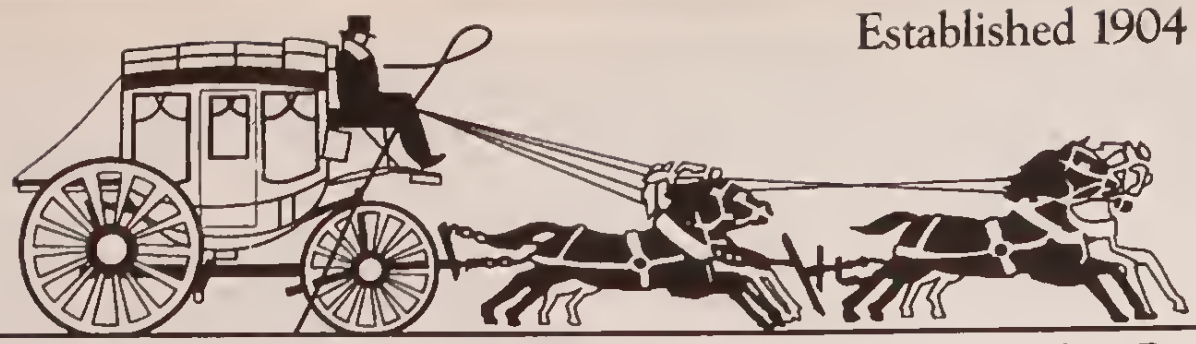
Gift Certificates for Any Amount May Be Purchased
140 Nassau St. Telephone 1753-W

Hulit's Shoes has advertised in every single issue since Town Topics' founding fifty years ago *(we were almost twenty years old)* and we take great pleasure in congratulating TOWN TOPICS on its 50th Anniversary.

Hulit's Shoes
142 Nassau Street 924-1952

◆ ANDIAMO ◆ BALLY ◆ BILLINGHAM ◆ BOSCA ◆ CARRERA ◆ CHARING CROSS ◆ COACH ◆ DELSEY ◆ DOONEY & BOURKE ◆ EAGLE CREEK ◆ EASTPAK ◆ FILOFAX ◆ FILSON ◆ FRENCH ◆ GANSON ◆ GARYS ◆ GHURKA ◆ HOLLAND SPORT ◆ KIPLING ◆ LOMBARDO ◆ MONT BLANC ◆ MONTEGRAPPA ◆ PARKER ◆ PELIKAN ◆ RAY-BAN ◆ REVO ◆ SCHLESINGER ◆ SERENGETI ◆ TRAVEL PRO ◆ TUMI ◆ WATERMAN

Established 1904



Business Cases • Handbags • Wallets • Luggage • Desk Accessories • Pens

Fine Leather Goods

Luttmann's

A Princeton tradition for 92 years

Some things just get better...

Happy 50th Town Topics!

Even though time has passed,

Legal Brief Bags

are as functional today as they were 50 years ago!

FOR IMPORTANT PEOPLE . . . .

The Brief Bag by R. REXBILT

(Ad ran in Town Topics, Circa 1946)

$33.00*
12½" x 16"
*inc. tax

Designed and exactingly made by REXBILT, the brief bag is the most amazingly versatile carrying case we've ever offered. Steel-framed for durability, with 3 large pockets, one with the very exclusive drop bottom. Bold stitching, custom-made locks and hardware, and lustrous cowhides, pigskins, other choice leathers. Assorted colors. 12½" x 16" or 14" x 18". *Three year guarantee!*

FOR IMPORTANT YOU • FOR AN IMPORTANT GIFT

LUTTMANN'S LUGGAGE
132 Nassau Street

Classic Brief Bag

(Circa 1996) by Schlesinger
Handcrafted in America since 1919

$495.00*
17½x13¼x7¼
*inc. tax

Designed and made by Schlesinger, the brief bag is the most amazingly versatile carrying case. Steel framed for durability, with 3 large pockets, one with the very exclusive drop bottom. Bold stitching, custom-made locks and hardware, and lustrous cowhides. Assorted colors. Lifetime guarantee!

Great for carrying notebook computers!

Luttmann's Luggage
20 Witherspoon Street • Princeton • 609-924-0004

In celebration,

Luttmann's is offering an additional $50 OFF any business case purchase, March 13-31.

Kay Bretnall

Continued from Preceding Page

office even as I write?) They all vie with each other, usually with vehemence, for the privilege of sitting through midnight meetings, enduring boundless loquacity from often abusive constituents. They are paid in nickles and dimes, and school board members don't even get that, and yet they run for office again and again. Dedicated insanity, that's what they have.

Now, we've come all this way without a glance across Nassau Street at the Gown part of Town. It was a half-century with seismic effect on Princeton University's campus, marked by the trustees' vote in 1969 to admit women as undergraduates. The Almanac spoke of the (male) undergraduate's football date, imported from Vassar. Today, she probably lives in his dorm.

Let's add a few questions from that 1946 kid curious about the future and savvy enough to know what questions to ask: "Hey, what's 'recycling?' Does it mean you're going to Kopp's Cycle Shop to get me a new bike for my birthday?"

"When you recycle, you use things again and again and Mercer County started recycling in the 1980s. Anybody from back in '46 would be baffled by those two tubs — bright yellow and dark green — that appear so mysteriously at curbside on Mondays and Tuesdays full of your paper, glass and metal. (To answer your other question, kiddo: "you haven't outgrown this bike yet.")

"Grandpa, what's a split-level?"

"In 1946, the rolling, rolling subdivisions hadn't yet shaped the Township into lots of split-level houses and that's an intended pun. The Big Building Bang came in the early and mid-50's."

"Grandma, what's a Shopping Center?"

"It's a center where you shop, stupid. Princeton's Shopping Center, built in the early 50s, was one of the first in this part of the country."

And if our young questionner could look really, really far, to ask about unknown things every Princeton resident knows today:

"Mom, what's a modem?"

And the absolute ultimate:

"Dad, what's 'cappuccino'?"

THE ONCE MAJESTIC PLAYHOUSE: It sat at the bottom of Palmer Square for about half a century, showing first-run movies to Princetonians, before falling to a wrecker's ball in 1980.

The Will of the People

(Reprinted from April 15, 1948)

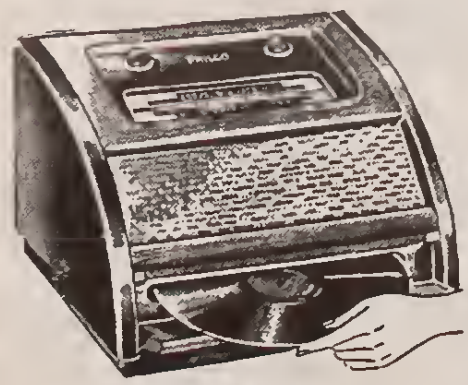
In support of the new New Jersey constitution approved by last Fall's referendum, Princeton's two boards of education announced simultaneously this week that racial segregation in the town's elementary schools will end in June. The decision, forecast first in Town Topics two months ago heralded a major change in the educational policies of a primary academic community.

Beginning in September, all Township pupils will enroll in that municipality's school where play space in the basement and the manual training room will be converted into temporary classrooms to accommodate 90 new pupils. "Educating these pupils in its own system," said the board, "will cost the Township less and at the same time, will make for better integration of the student population." The board could–and did– also point to the fact that it made immediate expansion more essential than ever.

The Borough will enroll all its pupils from kindergarten through grade five at the Nassau Street School and all those in grades six, seven and eight in the Witherspoon School on Quarry Street. Kindergartens may possibly be maintained at both locations, but use of the Witherspoon School by both municipalities for virtually all Negro children in Princeton will henceforth cease. Faculties, too, will be integrated.

Enumerating advantages for this procedure "far in excess of those provided by any other plan," the Borough board foresaw "an opportunity to improve what is already considered a most excellent school program." Wise, too, in the ways of mankind, it pointed out that "it could not possibly produce a plan which would meet with the unanimous approval of all the citizens of Princeton."

But it was worth recalling that the new constitution, motivating factor in the decision, was passed in Princeton last fall by the overwhelming margin of 8 to 1.



PHILCO '1201' Radio-Phonograph

Just Slide in a Record !!! and It Plays!

The easiest way to play records ever invented! Yes, even a child can play it! Starts—plays—and stops automatically. Adjusts itself for 10" and 12" records. A grand radio, too. Gleaming wood cabinet. $79.95

NASSAU APPLIANCE COMPANY

252 Nassau Street Telephone 2100

Hats Off to Town Topics!

Happy 50th

from all the staff at Merrick's

Joan Vass
Steve Fabrikant
Eileen Fisher
Magique Douceur
Elizabeth Wayman

you'll love shopping at

Merrick's on Moore

Distinctive Clothing For Women

6 Moore Street, Princeton ~ 609-921-0338
Monday-Saturday 10-6; Thursday 'til 9; Sunday 12-4

No Single Institution
Captures the Essence
of Princeton Better Than
Town Topics

HARRY BALLOT
Clothiers
Princeton

Since 1924

Twenty Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ
609-924-0451

Then...
(Nov. 1959)
HURRY HURRY
and Save from 40% to 60% on Toys, Trains and Accessories
Thousands of Dollars worth of Toys and Trains must be Sold before Christmas
SALES FINAL
No refunds or Exchanges

English and American Bicycles & Parts
Tricycles, Wagons, Sleds
Automobiles
Accessories & Repairs
Where Service after Sale Counts

Radios, Frying Pans, Toasters, Irons etc.
Use our Layaway Plan for any purchase

TIGER
Auto Stores Inc.
24-26 Witherspoon
WA 4-5715

And Now...
Jay's Cycles

The Bicycle Store!
New Jersey's Largest Trek Dealer
249 Nassau Street 609-924-7233

Congratulations to
TOWN TOPICS
On Its 50th Anniversary

From...
The Finest Hardware in Princeton
The Best Interior Design in Princeton
To...
The Greatest Paper in Princeton

Congratulations on your 50th!

URKEN
HARDWARE & DESIGN
Mon.-Sat. 8-5:30; Thurs. 'til 8; Sun. 10-4
27 Witherspoon Street • Princeton, NJ • 609-924-3076

HINKSON'S
82 NASSAU STREET • 924-0112
Princeton's Oldest and
Only Stationery Store Since 1943
wishes to congratulate
TOWN TOPICS
on its 50 years
of outstanding service
to the Princeton Community

a gardener's paradise
Peterson's
A family business dedicated
to Quality and Service since 1939
and
proud supporters of
Town Topics
for 45 years
Complete and Unique
Garden Center
where quality and service prevail
featuring
everything for "the gardener"
including a country gift shop
with handmade products
tools, water garden supplies
excellent selection of stone
and lots more...
Come see for yourself!
Located on Route 206 betw. Princeton and Lawrenceville
609-924-5770

TOWN TOPICS
CONGRATULATIONS
ON YOUR 50th!

1 Town
Store
Jeweler*
Customer
One-On-One

*the best personal service and price

Forest Jewelers INC.
104 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ • 609-924-1363

WHO SAYS YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN?

By Asa S. Bushnell 3d

As *Town Topics* heads happily into its second half-century — looking with confidence toward the year 2046 — the opportunity to reminisce seems most appropriate. For me, that means going back to the start of this remarkable newspaper's second decade, a challenging yet welcome assignment.

Actually, I joined the small staff at *Town Topics* as one of two assistant editors — young, talented Thomas S. Godolphin was the other — in early September 1955, two weeks before my 30th birthday. It truly marked a homecoming for me, since I had grown up in Princeton, formed life-long friendships at the old Nassau Street Elementary School, and graduated with Princeton University's "war torn but peaced together" Class of 1947. Also, of considerable significance, my parents, Asa S. and Thelma Bushnell, still lived in a comfortable third-floor apartment on Palmer Square in the heart of the Borough.

Having been away from my hometown since the spring of 1948, primarily in faraway Tucson, Ariz., I noticed at once that people, places and things had left the scene (or, at least, changed): No "Jigger Man" peddling his indigestible but ingratiating wares on Nassau Street. No "Connie" — the seemingly indestructible "Connie" — at the Nass. No coffee in the wee hours at The Balt, whose original owner threw away the front-door key, vowing never to close. No more designed-for-students Renwick's, newly refurbished with fancy decor aimed at a more genteel clientele.

Oh, of course, there remained many vestiges of the past, reminders of traditional, change-resistant Princeton: Those enormously popular Memorial Day Parades, followed by those enormously boisterous Volunteer Firemen's Picnics. Those excited gestures of genuine warmth outside Jack Honore's Barber Shop, provided by legendary deaf-mute bootblack Elias Scudder. Those stately locked gates in front of Nassau Hall, opened only each Reunion Saturday to permit passage by the 25th Reunion Class. (No kidding, that was a time-honored tradition, like the Reunion P-rades down Prospect Avenue, until ... well, let's save that subject for another special section.)

A book could be written about the aforementioned Mr. Scudder, who showed more love and loyalty for the University than most alumni and inspired a few of them, including my father, to learn sign language simply to communicate with him over the years. The dedicated bootblack died during my three and a half-year stint at *Town Topics*, after suffering a heart attack while running across campus to catch a train to the Princeton-Yale football game in New Haven. I attended his funeral, wishing in silence that I could relate the wonderful tale about Tiger alumni securing his release from the New Haven pokey after a previous game there by convincing the jailer that the overenthusiastic deaf-mute fan was the father of Yale tailback/hero Levi Jackson.

PRINCETON PALS SINCE THIRD GRADE: Pictured at a recent Reunion of the Princeton University Class of 1947 are (left to right) septuagenarians Jack Madden, Bob Wohlforth, Asa Bushnell and Mark Hodapp, who met in Nassau Street Elementary School and have remained close friends ever since. "Ace" Bushnell, 70, who worked as a reporter for *Town Topics* from 1955 to 1959, is now community relations manager for the Pima County Sheriff's Department in Arizona.

The week I began my employ at *Town Topics* I noticed an advertisement in the paper heralding Bamberger's first anniversary sale at Princeton Shopping Center. A shopping center ... in Princeton? ... I made a mental note to check it out (little realizing I would be delivering copies of the paper to the center the next Thursday morning.)

Indeed, the face of Princeton was changing. I soon would be reporting on the installation of the town's first three-unit traffic light system at the "controversial" intersection of Nassau Street, Bayard Lane and Stockton Street, a telltale signal of things to come. There soon would be 1,000 commuters from the Princeton area counting on the Pennsylvania Railroad to take them to New York or Philadelphia every workday.

For that matter, *Town Topics* had changed a lot since Donald C. Stuart, Jr. and Dan D. Coyle, editors and publishers, founded the "little paper" in 1946. I read it as an undergraduate at the outset, and with added interest after my dad was nominated "Man of the Week" in the first year of publication. (That feature, saluting a man, woman or group of the week, filled the front page and proved a good draw for many years.)

Town Topics resembled a thick timetable in its early days, as Mr. Stuart and Mr. Coyle scrambled to develop a base of permanent advertisers, and the primitive operation took place in three different rooms around the Borough, one located in the back of the old Western Union office at Nassau and Witherspoon.

Not until 1950 was the future of the growing tabloid looking bright enough for a consolidation of its vital functions at 4 Mercer Street, from whence it continues to operate in 1996. With the publishers finally putting meals on their tables, it was fitting they rented the building that formerly housed Martha's Kitchen, a home-cooking restaurant to which my family ventured on very special occasions during my childhood.

When I contacted Mr. Stuart for a job interview over Reunion Weekend in 1955, he understandably asked why I wanted to leave my position as city editor for the Tucson Daily Citizen, in a market five times the size of Princeton. I responded with the reasons already stated in this article, and I believe he may have been unduly influenced by our shared respect for both Princetons — town and gown — as well as his admiration for my father, then commissioner of the Eastern College Athletic Conference, for whom he had worked in New York in the early 1940s.

Before the final offer was tendered, I also informed Messrs. Stuart and Coyle that more than three years in the city editor's hot seat had readied me for a change of pace — the relaxed pace of weekly journalism. They apparently neglected to mention that a weekly deadline could be just as demanding as one or two deadlines a day, because I would be expected to allocate my hours to cover events and meetings, write stories and obituaries to fill much of the news hole, sell and prepare several ads, drive down to Mt. Holly to assist the printer with make-up, and deliver papers to the Post Office and widespread outlets — and still beat that one, crucial deadline week after relentless week.

The grind made me glad I had youth going for me, especially in the first year, when I commuted from a house in Hightstown due to an acute shortage of rental properties in Princeton. But it was worth it for the tremendous learning experience — and, more importantly, for the chance to work with the finest bunch of people I have encountered in more than 50 years of toil at about 25 job sites.

Continued on Next Page

THEN...

NEW — POLIO POLICY

John F. Bernard

TWO YEARS COVERAGE

A $10.00 premium covers the entire family, pays $5,000.000 for each case of Infantile Paralysis. Individual Policy — $5.00.

No one can afford to take a chance on not having $5,000.00 available IMMEDIATELY to pay for the finest kind of treatment in case this dread disease strikes one or more members of the family.

We wish there was some insurance guaranteeing immunity for all against polio but at least we can remove one worry — the FINANCIAL one.

THE PRINCETON AGENCY, Inc.

11 Chambers Street — Phone 2030

(ad circa 1949)

AND NOW...

John Bernard

Jay Bernard

In 1959
SDB Insurance
and
The Princeton Agency, Inc.
merged.

SDB

Sturhahn, Dickenson & Bernard

INSURANCE SPECIALISTS

14 Main St., Kingston, N.J. • 921-6880

Ace Bushnell

Continued from Preceding Page

Don Stuart personified the spirit of *Town Topics*, insisting on quality writing and accuracy, the only way to attract interested readers without relying on the big headlines used by most conventional newspapers. He taught me to lead stories with a "future angle," even if I was reporting on a zoning hearing held five days prior to publication. He demonstrated an incredible work ethic — he always seemed to be at his desk — and he never required the rest of us to labor longer or harder than the boss. By genial example, he inspired us to succeed.

Co-founder Dan Coyle — perpetual motion in a human body — made the most of his cameo appearances at *Town Topics*, bringing with him good cheer, excitement, bright ideas and copy for the "Man of the Week" column, usually composed at the eleventh hour in a beautifully flowing style that bore his own brand. A dynamic advocate of town/gown solidarity, he balanced his elective position on Borough Council with a full-time administrative post in Nassau Hall.

Mary Coyle, the other half of a mutual admiration society of the first rank, anchored our multi-purpose newsroom, maintaining a calm that often belied the typical journalistic undercurrents. Her contagious smile, her in-person and on-phone sunny disposition, her sense of reasonableness, and her tireless stick-to-it-iveness combined to keep us on an even keel.

Contributing Editor Kay Bretnall, responsible for some key ad accounts and the bread-and-butter "It's New to Us" section, wrote so enticingly about each new enterprise in Princeton — and each new addition to established firms — that she became indispensable. Merchants clamored for the Bretnall endorsement. Consistency and fairness were her hallmarks and, as she blossomed into a reviewer, feature writer, hard news reporter and an all-around "Gal Friday," her presence added luster to the *Town Topics* success story for a span of 31 years.

My closest colleague, Tom Godolphin, ever full of wit and wisdom as well as the devil, was a splendid young writer — intelligent, quick and bursting with ideas. As we burned the midnight oil into deadline morning, we customarily lifted a few toasts to each other's prowess, but these memorable interludes never interfered with the professionalism of our product. We prided ourselves on the style and content of the paper, and delighted in creating new features: "This is Princeton," the up-front section for articles of greater substance than mere "Topics of the Town;" the weekly weather box, including a four-line weather poem that staffers took turns concocting; and the "Question of the Week," which got the names and faces of residents into our pages and usually addressed a vital issue of the day.

Wednesday nights were "family nights" at *Town Topics*, because it took a lot of helping hands to prepare the tabloid for distribution the following morning. My nemesis was the Wing Mailer, a contraption undoubtedly designed by Rube Goldberg, which is used to affix labels to the paper for mailing, yet which came apart or spurted too much glue with me at the helm. (I am informed by Jeb Stuart, the current editor and publisher and son of the co-founder, that the same apparatus remains the most economical way to address the paper, but surely it has been subjected to technological overhauls in the last 40 years.)

Despite our protestations, we reaped more ecstasy than agony in the Wednesday night ritual, and we were rewarded Thursday morning as newcomers lined up on the sidewalk outside of *Town Topics* to catch a pre-delivery glimpse of its treasure trove: the unclassified ads in the back pages. That picture will not leave my mind: the phenomenon of people frantically seeking an apartment or house to rent or purchase in the Princeton area and eager to wade through countless ads for every imaginable item to reach their goal.

Mr. Godolphin left us about midway through my *Town Topics* tenure — to pursue advanced degrees at Cornell and broaden his knowledge for a promising teaching career — and then he left us altogether, after earning those degrees, when he wrapped his Volkswagen around a tree in a fatal waste of rare ability. Though his departure for graduate school enabled me to become the paper's first (and only) managing editor, I would have settled for our continued joint assistantships just to be buoyed by the twinkle in his eyes, the laughter in his voice, the joy in his heart.

"HISS-TERIA": Town Topics' photographer caught Alger Hiss moving quickly up the steps of Whig Hall on the Princeton University campus one April evening in 1956. The invitation for Hiss to speak to the undergraduate debating society became controversial and an instant media event.

With a limited staff, I necessarily covered numerous events and wrote an untold amount of words each week. Routine happenings dominated the "news," so the test came when we decided what material should fill our lead pages. On occasion the decision — and the material — required resourceful creativity.

By far the biggest story I handled in my three-plus years with *Town Topics* unfolded during the spring of 1956: the controversial invitation extended to convicted perjurer Alger Hiss by student officers of the Whig-Cliosophic Society to deliver a speech on the Princeton campus. Angry alumni flooded Nassau Hall with objections as well as threats to abandon Annual Giving, media columnists and commentators savored every juicy tidbit, and we gave the sensitive incident play-by-play treatment for four consecutive issues.

The ballyhooed build-up proved far more exciting than the speaking engagement, which occurred without any revealing or stimulating statements by Mr. Hiss or anticipated rioting by Princeton students. Whereas my story a week before the event insisted "HISS-teria Grips Princeton," my aftermath report indicated simply, "Hiss-teria Now Hiss-tory."

In its May 3, 1976 issue, to observe the 20th anniversary of the brouhaha, the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* analyzed every detail in a 12-page opus entitled "The Hiss Hassle Revisited." The PAW writer concluded correctly that the affair marked a victory for students' rights — upheld by then University President Harold Dodds and his administration against mounting opposition — rather than free speech, which would grab the spotlight in the 1960s.

Unfortunately, the painstaking PAW article was not error free; it stated, "Asa Bushnell '21 drew the assignment for *Town Topics*"

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MRS G

CONGRATULATIONS
~ 50 YEARS ~
TOWN TOPICS

Few Businesses can claim
50 Years of Service,
as the Town Topics can.

To achieve a milestone such as this,
a business must be committed to survive
through all types of economic times
as we at Mrs. G's have.

With Personal Attention,
Honesty and Integrity, we strive to
satisfy our customers every day.

A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY REBATE
Is Yours On Your Next Purchase
At Mrs. G's.
Bring in this ad for your rebate • Offer expires 4/30/96

ROUTE 1 (NORTH) at Baker's Basin/Franklin Corner Rd.
• From Pa via Rt. 1, 6 mi. N of toll booth • From Rt. 95/295, exit Rt. 1 South, ¼ mi.
• Located 1½ mi. South of Quaker Bridge Mall
LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ 08648
609-882-1444
OPEN
MON-FRI 9 AM-9 PM
SAT 9 AM-6 PM
SUN 11 AM-5 PM
$1500 INSTANT CREDIT TO QUALIFIED BUYERS

APARRI
217 Nassau Street, Princeton, N.J.
School of Dance

Congratulations!

Town Topics

Best Wishes
from
a long-time advertiser

mila gibbons

Ace Bushnell

Continued from Preceding Page

— a highly unlikely role for the ECAC commissioner. But it was a legitimate mistake; after all, my father and I were not bearers of a familiar moniker.

Often, while living and working in Princeton, I would be introduced to people whose reaction invariably was, "Oh, you must be Asa Bushnell's son." Only once, to the best of my recollection, was the reverse true: when Borough Police Officer Tom Procaccino stopped my dad for speeding, he said, "Oh, you must be Asa Bushnell's father." Of course, I knew most of the Borough and Township cops — Bob Anderson and Dan Hagadorn from elementary school days, the others from pounding both municipal beats. (Well, perhaps a few of them from that New Year's Eve ruckus at the Millstone Inn or the time I totaled my new '58 Buick Roadmaster near the battleground on Mercer Street, or...)

Week in and week out, *Town Topics* covered local sports like a blanket. Don Stuart focused on University athletics in masterful fashion, while I was responsible for the teams at Princeton High School and Hun School as well as those playing American Legion baseball or sporting business logos — or you name it. During my first basketball season with the Little Tigers, for example, "Marvelous Marv" Trotman (so dubbed by yours truly) displayed moves on the court I have never seen at that level, averaged an "astounding" 28.6 points per game and established a PHS regular-season record of 1,224 points for his three-year varsity career. Later in 1956, Mr. Stuart applauded the advent of the formalized Ivy League as round-robin football schedules went into effect for the Elite Eight.

My advertising accounts included such *Town Topics* regulars as Nassau Interiors and the Wine & Game Shop — and, particularly on Oct. 8, 1956, the Annex Restaurant. As I recall vividly, it took me all afternoon on that date to get the Annex ad "just right," since I was somewhat distracted by New York Yankee pitcher Don Larsen, who was getting everything right in a 2-0 perfect-game World Series triumph over the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Through the memories, a recurrent figure emerged: ubiquitous free-lance photographer Alan Richards, the lovable, excitable Englishman who had gained notoriety for his Hoover-Truman-Eisenhower film-op at the Princeton Bicentennial in 1947 and had designated himself biographical cameraman for famed fellow resident Albert Einstein. Mr. Richards was a genuine worrywart, always ahead of schedule and anxious to get going, always exasperating in his meticulous preparation for each shoot, and always insistent on taking an overabundance of shots to make sure he had a "good one" to sell to *Town Topics*. I thoroughly enjoyed my relationship with this gilt-edged character and I will make my amends in heaven for driving him crazy by suggesting near-impossible photos and intentionally causing him to run late.

A Winston Churchill look-alike and a would-be thespian, Mr. Richards demonstrated his flair for the theatrical — and his ad-lib alertness — while portraying a British barrister in a PJ&B Community Players production of "Witness for the Prosecution" in the small theater on Alexander Street. One evening the "dinky" roared past the theater and interrupted Mr. Richards' favorite soliloquy in the courtroom scene, prompting him to exclaim, "Bloody tram, what a nuisance!"

In its issue dated June 22-28, 1958, *Town Topics* led with a dramatic story that affected me more deeply than any other piece I wrote for the paper. It has haunted me for almost four decades, perhaps because I have read hauntingly similar articles in other newspapers in other communities — and, in each instance, some troubling questions have remained unanswered. Our coverage began as follows:

Too Much, Too Soon

"It's up to you young men and women, and young people like you throughout the country, to determine whether man's knowledge is too much for his own intelligence. Whether the knowledge of how to produce these marvels of science has truly outstripped man's intelligence of how to handle them."

—Graham Rohrer

When Graham Rohrer, president of the Borough Board of Education, wrote his 1958

Continued on Next Page

CHEERING FOR PRINCETON HIGH IN 1949: Town Topics' first began to print news pictures in the fall of 1949, and one of the first was this smiling octet of PHS cheerleaders. Seated are: Carol Douglas, Connie Brunner and Marianna Hennon; (second row) Marilyn Murphy and Betty Giroux; and (top row) Mary Toole, Janice Lowe and Lois Calkin.

From the Entire Staff at

Rider Furniture

Happy 50th Anniversary!

Shop & Compare for Quality, Price & Service

• Dining, Bedroom, Occasional •
• Leather Furniture •
• Carpeting & Area Rugs •
• Custom Upholstery •
• Prints •
• Baskets •
• Lamps & Accessories •

Rider Furniture

"Fine Quality Home Furnishings at Substantial Savings"

12-14 Main Street (Route 27) • Kingston, NJ
Hours: Mon-Fri 10-6; Thurs 10-8; Sat 10-5; Sun 12-4
609-924-0147

Ace Bushnell

Continued from Preceding Page

"graduation talk" — including the lines above — four young men and women of Princeton High School who might have heard his words were still alive. The four — one senior, two juniors and a sophomore — died in a car crash before he spoke Wednesday evening. Truly, the automobile, a scientific marvel, had outstripped a fifth student's intelligence of how to handle it.

Before I resigned from *Town Topics* in the spring of 1959 to accept a state position as public relations director for New Jersey Attorney General David Furman, I wrote several general observations about Princeton in the late '50s that may startle today's readers, who may be convinced they really were written ... well, today.

"The University has put out the 'welcome' mat for research concerns. It has encouraged the industrialists to utilize Firestone Library and other cultural facilities, to join the local chapters of national science societies and to maintain close relations with the Princeton faculty.

"All of these moves have contributed immeasurably to the establishment of a truly great intellectual center. In the process, however, they also have contributed to some mundane municipal matters that remain scrambled despite the eggheads. Surrounding townships have benefited from the tax ratables accompanying the industrial invasion, but taxes have skyrocketed in Princeton Township, where many of the industries' personnel have decided to settle — and send their youngsters to top-flight schools.

"Ironically, each of the new industries has a post office box in Princeton so it can trade on the commercial value of Princeton's name."

I also referred to the "traffic dilemma" and "vehicular turmoil," emphasizing an oft-repeated notion: "There are many who believe that as Princeton moves forward with the times, comprehensive planning will dictate consolidation of Borough and Township."

Raymond F. Male, the enterprising mayor of the Borough when these observations were made (and, incidentally, the only Democrat for whom my dad ever voted), may have sensed the consolidation frustration that goes on and on and on. Shortly thereafter, he became head of a state department in Trenton — and, thanks to our friendship, he soon helped me to secure my job there.

Looking back at my relatively short stay at *Town Topics*, I wonder if author Thomas Wolfe knew something I didn't know when he completed *You Con't Go Home Agoin* in 1940. The seven-year itch got to me by 1962 — and I was off to Tucson for a third time. But I left with an undying love for my only hometown, the realization of rekindled friendships — the Reeves Hickses and Herb Hobiers of my life — and evergreen memories, with no regrets, of the fulfilling *Town Topics* experience.

CHARMING, COMFORTABLE

and

AVAILABLE

At a really reasonable price. A ranch-type house of excellent construction in one of Princeton's better neighborhoods. Three double bedrooms, two tile baths. Large beautiful lot. Modern in every detail. $20,000

CONSULT

EDMUND D. COOK REALTOR

100 NASSAU STREET

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

TELEPHONE 000

WANTED

Messenger Boys with Bicycles

See Mr. Hamer

WESTERN UNION

92 Nassau St.

All Corners of the World

(Reprinted from April 28, 1955)

No event that has ever occurred in Princeton has been of more widespread significance than completion of the life-span of the man who rewrote mankind's understanding of the universe.

As news of the death of Dr. Albert Einstein spread throughout the world Monday morning (April 25), agreement was widespread in free nations and behind the Iron Curtain as well that one of the great scientists of all time had finished his work on earth.

When the first announcement of his death was made public for radio, television and newspaper use shortly after 8 a.m., representatives of all three media converged on the community. Princeton correspondents of metropolitan papers and national wire services telephoned all details as quickly as they became available, but it took a full-fledged press conference at Princeton Hospital to provide the myriad facts and background material that rapidly found their way to New York and Keokuk, Moscow and Berlin, China and Argentina.

For the better part of an hour, more than a score of reporters and staff writers partook in a detailed question-and-answer period on the famed mathematician's last days. It was in no sense a morbid interest that prompted them, nor was there a lack of justification for their searching inquiries. Dr. Einstein's theory of relativity and his ability to unlock for the 20th century the secret of utilizing atomic power had long ago transposed him (no matter how much against his will) from a quiet, retiring individual to a world figure. The world wanted to hear his final chapter.

Among those participating in the press conference were Miss Helen Dukas, Dr. Einstein's longtime secretary-housekeeper; Dr. Herman Weyl, emeritus professor at the Institute for Advanced Study and a close friend; Otto Nathan, executor of his estate; Mrs. William Russell, executive secretary of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer; Dr. Guy K. Dean and Dr. Thomas Harvey of Princeton Hospital. The conference was directed by Dan D. Coyle, who serves as the hospital's director of public relations.

At its conclusion, eight of the 10 outgoing telephone lines in the building were assigned to the press. In line with hospital policy, photographers were barred inside the building, but every central figure in the story was the object of a battery of cameras in the spring sunshine outside the building.

Throughout the day and until well past midnight, the Princeton community, the Einstein house at 112 Mercer and the Institute for Advanced Study were the scenes of further searching for story detail and for pictures. From 11:30 until noon the Columbia Broadcasting System telecast a special program designed to evaluate the tremendous contribution Einstein had made to science and to shaping the course of future world events. A major portion of the program originated from the Institute's Fuld Hall and here in Princeton.

State, national and international figures the world over paid tribute to his accomplishments. Here in Princeton, University President Harold W. Dodds' statement spoke eloquently for town and gown alike:

"The contributions which Dr. Einstein made to man's understanding of nature are beyond assessment in our day. Only future generations will be competent to grasp their full significance.

"He combined broad human sympathy and a deep appreciation of the arts with his scientific genius. As a member of the Institute for Advanced Study from its earliest days when it was based on the University campus, Dr. Einstein has been a valued member of this community. We are deeply saddened at his passing."

We've been around so long even our lousy wines are pretty good.

Serving Princeton since 1939. Incidentally, an excellent year. Claridge Wine and Liquor

Princeton Shopping Center

"Tip of the Iceberg:" The Making of a Journalist

by Barbara L. Johnson

Going to the *Town Topics* office 39 years ago to place an ad for a little red bicycle that had disappeared from our porch, the thought first crossed my mind that this would be a nice place in which to work.

It was 1957 and I had just moved to Prinnceton from New York City with two little boys, age 3½ and 4½. I was not quite 25 and was recently divorced. I don't remember how we came to have the little two wheeler, which we kept on the front porch of our half of the double house we rented on Wiggins Street, but it was the pride and joy of the older boy, who relished riding it up and down the sidewalk and part way around the block.

Great was his consternation the day it disappeared from the porch. Someone told us the thing to do was to put an ad in *Town Topics*. We made our way to No. 4 Mercer Street, where I remember surveying the people at desks with typewriters in the front office. I had been an English major at college, with vague aspirations of becoming an editor at a publishing house and an even vaguer notion of "being a writer." But I had left college after my sophomore year to marry and judged myself unemployable without a degree.

We placed the ad, where it appeared in the unclassified classified section that was then — and still is — such a quaint and charming characteristic of this particular paper. I worded it to convey the desolation of my son, and within 24 hours of delivery of that week's issue, the phone rang with an anonymous tip as to where we could find it. Although it was many years before I had a need to place another ad, I have always had great faith in the efficacy of *Town Topics'* classifieds.

It was many years too before the idea of working at *Town Topics* resurfaced and was realized. Meanwhile I married again and had two more sons. I volunteered in the community and at schools, and whenever feasible I started a newsletter or worked on an established publication, like the June Fete program. More and more, writing was becoming the thing I enjoyed doing above all else.

In the fall of 1974, I was seated at a dinner party next to Donald C. Stuart, *Town Topics* founding editor and publisher with Dan Coyle. We talked about Nova Scotia, where he enjoyed playing golf in August, and Martha's Vineyard, where our family had recently been renting in the summer. I don't think we talked much about *Town Topics*, but I remember distinctly his saying, as the dinner party broke up, "When you are ready, come on in."

In March of 1975, the time was right. When I went for an interview the people had changed, but the desks, the typewriters and the atmosphere of a newspaper in the process of being put out week after week were as alluring as ever. I didn't think I had a chance — no experience, except those PTA newsletters, one of which I brought with me as a writing sample.

Luckily the perfect part-time job was just opening up. It was to do "back of the book" things like engagements and weddings, the birth list, people in the news, obituaries, news of clubs and organizations, religion and the calendar, with the possibility of graduating to writing feature articles. Don asked me whether I thought I could handle doing the same thing over and over week after week. "When you have done one calendar," he said, "there are 51 more yet to come."

I told him that being a housewife was similar. You no sooner wash, dry, roll into a ball and put away one pair of socks than it is taken out to be worn again. He seemed satisfied with that answer and said he would let me know. *Town Topics* was very much a family operation, he explained, and he would have to talk it over with the other members of the "family," — by which he meant those who worked there as well as his son Jeb, who had returned to Princeton after journalism school to put out the paper with him.

Evidently I passed muster. I recall vividly the joy and excitement I felt when Don told me at a second interview that I had the job and could start in April. I wanted to do cartwheels in the street as I rode home on my bike. The only other times I have experienced such acute happiness was at the births of my sons.

When I reported for work in mid-April, I went first to Don's office, where he proceeded to instruct me in the art and science of journalism. I still have the sheets from a yellow legal pad he gave me to write down things I needed to know. I had much to learn.

Style, which in school and college English classes referred to some intangible characteristic of a piece of writing, turned out to mean a set of rules about things like abbreviation and what to capitalize and what not to capitalize — rules which often went counter to what I had been taught in grade school. At school, each paragraph was supposed to have an introductory sentence and could be any length as long as the subject matter related to the lead. A new thought required a new paragraph.

In the newspaper world, I learned, paragraphs are never longer than three sentences, no matter what, except for the lead, which is usually a single sentence but could be two. Don preferred two, my notes from that day state, and he was strongly opposed to the one sentence paragraphs one often sees in the more sensational dailies.

I was impressed by how he identified with the reader. Explaining the three-em dashes that must be inserted after every second paragraph, he said they are like stepping stones in the river of type, places where the reader can rest before going on.

Accuracy was essential, he told me, and one must always ask oneself, "Have I given the reader the best possible information?" A year or so later when I began writing feature stories, he admonished me that the reader isn't interested in a welter of detail. The reader is happy getting "just the tip of the iceberg," as he put it, free to think about what lies below the surface and explore it further or to ignore it.

Don told me that *Town Topics* follows the New York Times style "90 percent," and I went out and bought the Times style manual to better educate myself on this new way of approaching writing. But I learned that there are some stylistic matters that are particular

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AN APT PUPIL: When she came to Town Topics in 1975, Barbara Johnson learned newspaper reporting and writing from Don Stuart. She took his teaching to heart, and for the past 21 years has turned out carefully crafted articles on municipal meetings and informative feature stories on this town and its citizens.

In the Face of Rising Costs Everywhere, Our Efficient Service AND Our Prices Will Remain the Same!

DURNER'S BARBER SHOP

120 Nassau Street Tel. 3246

Kingston Bakery & Coffeehouse

serving
continental breakfast and lunch...
the best bakery, sandwiches, soups,
salads and daily specialties in town
– eat-in or carry-out –

Main Street

the flagship store
Kingston Bakery & Coffeehouse
56 Main St., Kingston 921-2778

Congratulations
TOWN TOPICS
On Your 50th Anniversary

RCP MANAGEMENT COMPANY
Providing Property Management Throughout the State of New Jersey
609-683-7980

From this opening teaser ad in TOWN TOPICS *in August 1960... to our first ad in October...*

QUESTION:

Where Will John be?

ANSWER:

AT THE

206 HARDWARE

RT. 206 OPP. PRINCETON AIRPORT

WATCH FOR OUR

OPENING

Why YOU Should Buy at 206 HARDWARE CO.

X-TRA SPECIAL

RUBBER TIRE WHEELBARROW K. D. — Reg. $11.95 — $5.98

PAINT SPECIALS

	Reg	Our Price
Outside White	7.35	5.85
Bandex White, 5 lbs.	1.95	1.25
Pan and Roller	98¢	49¢
Gum Turpentine, gal.	1.69	1.09

Complete Stock Gun Shells

ZIPPER TOP TRASH BURNER

Reg. $2.50 — $1.49

Fully Guaranteed Electrical Appliances

Automatic Toaster	$7.98
Steam Iron	7.98
Hair Dryer	4.98
Automatic Perc. (10 cup)	7.98

10 x 20 x 1
15 x 20 x 1
16 x 20 x 1
20 x 20 x 1
16 x 25 x 1

Fiber Glass FURNACE FILTERS — 59¢ each

SAVE! SAVE! SAVE!

All Metal Ironing Board With Pad and Cover	$6.59
Revere Tea Kettle	2.98

Prices Good 'Til Oct. 15 (1960)
ALL ORDERS FILLED

X-TRA SPECIAL

ZEREX $2.19 GAL.

Permanent Anti Freeze
Also Prestone

SAVE ON STANLEY TOOLS

	Reg.	Our Price
#5 Plane	11.50	9.20
#9½ Black Plane	5.95	4.75
#100 Hammer	4.50	3.60
#D-23 Disston Saw	9.79	7.79

No Hunting Signs — $5.00 a hundred

ZERONE

$1.09 GAL.

WA1-2448
We deliver

206 HARDWARE CO.

OPEN 'TIL 9 MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

Route 206
Opp. Princeton Airport

to our spacious, new store in Montgomery Shopping Center today, we are proud of our 36 years of growth and in serving the Princeton Area Community

We Salute Town Topics on its 50th Anniversary this month and wish them continued success.

— John, Mary and Mike Stachowicz —

206 HARDWARE & HOME CENTER

Routes 206 & 518 • Montgomery Center • Rocky Hill • 921-2448

Barbara Johnson

Continued from Preceding Page

to *Town Topics*.

Here is a note he wrote me on my first full day at work, typed on the back of the page for the previous day torn from his desk calendar:

"As a matter of general procedure, everyone listed in "People in the News" should have a street address. We do make exceptions when someone is identified as being with a large institution, such as the University, etc., but prefer to include street addresses in every case ... in most cases where we cannot find one, we toss out the item, since we have so many. Those for whom no address is given have frequently moved away."

Over the next six years, Don wrote me many such notes. Since he passed on every piece of copy, he would also come to my office bearing something I had worked on to show me my mistakes. What was most difficult for me was to cross out the adjectives sprinkled through a press release about a benefit by a volunteer publicity chairman to draw paying patrons. I thought they added color, but Don explained that in print they became the newspaper's opinion and thus a form of editorializing.

He disliked "gala" as an adjective as much as he objected to turning the noun "host" into a verb. He also explained that it was up to the reader to discover whether or not the event was truly "gala" or the dinner "sumptuous."

I shared the smaller front office with Preston Eckmeder, who was indispensable as school sports writer and crime reporter, advertising representative, and unloading and delivery man. Kay Bretnall had her own office toward the back where she turned out an astonishing amount of copy on all manner of subjects but was particularly known for her coverage of school and municipal news.

Between our office and hers was the room shared by the two advertising reps who did the bulk of the retail ads. In the big front room were the women who handled the real estate ads and the subscription/circulation details, took classifieds, answered the phones and did proofreading.

When I first started, we all had typewriters of various vintages, and we all were supplied with reams of unbleached copy paper. We typed our stories on this paper, editing each page in pencil before taking it to Don's office. All editorial copy, whether a press release that we processed or original work, crossed Don's desk, as did every piece of advertising copy. The next step was into the composing room where copy was turned into type by nimble-fingered tape punchers and ribbons of type and rectangles of ads were pasted onto layout sheets.

The rhythm of our work was geared to the production schedule. Certain parts of the paper were delivered to the printer ahead of others, and in my notes from Don, continued in a green spiral notebook, there are reminders of what was due when. There are also aphorisms, such as "Don't use the present to denote the future," "Avoid cheap abbreviations, i.e. Boro for Borough," and "The printed word that carries no axe to grind is very strong."

There were certain words that were anathema to Don. He taught me to use "live" instead of "reside" in obituaries, to substitute "call" instead of "contact" on press releases that gave a phone number and to avoid the word "local" except to describe local purpose tax.

He was quietly firm about all this, but also invariably polite. What was paramount was the quality and consistency of the writing. He loved *Town Topics*, that was clear. One of my favorite memories of Don is the way he greeted us when we came back from vacation. Standing by the back door as we came in after being away for a time, he would stick out his hand, and with a special smile that seemed to be reserved for just that occasion, would welcome us back into this joint endeavor that meant so much to him.

Don died very suddenly in the spring of 1981, just 10 days after being diagnosed with leukemia. It was a shock to all of us, but with Jeb taking over the helm, we went right on publishing without missing a beat. I view the six years I spent under Don's tutelage as an apprenticeship in journalism, and a very valuable one.

I began writing feature stories a year or so after joining *Town Topics*. In 1980 I started covering Township Committee. In 1984 Kay retired, I moved into her office, and work assignments were reshuffled between myself and Myrna Bearse, who was hired to take her place. I began covering the Planning Board and the Township Zoning Board in addition to Township Committee. I wrote more features and found myself covering more "beats," more organizations and institutions in town. I went from part-time to full-time, one of three assistant editors.

Town Topics was well established but only 11 years old when I placed the ad for the purloined bicycle. It was 29 by the time I joined the staff. Today, when I am asked on income tax returns and other forms to state my profession, I write "Journalist."

I do so proudly and more confidently than I ever would have dreamed possible, but also knowing that if it had not been for *Town Topics* and Don Stuart it never would have happened.

REMEMBER WHEN: In the 1950's PHS students painted Halloween scenes in store windows.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Congratulations on Your 50th Town Topics...
Our Favorite Promoter

The Perfect Gift of Princeton

246 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ 08540
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ANOTHER MILESTONE!

Jeb Stuart with his son, Craig, at his graduation from Princeton Day Shcool in 1987.

And with his daughter, Laurie, at her graduation from Princeton Day Shcool in 1989

Jeb Stuart (center) in 1956 with part of his ninth grade graduating class at Princeton Country Day School

PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL
CONGRATULATES THE STUART FAMILY
ON TOWN TOPICS' FIRST 50 YEARS

We Congratulate
The Town Topics
on its
50th Anniversary.

The English Shop
32 Nassau Street • Princeton
609-924-7100

Serving men's clothing needs since 1951

Kuller Travel,
a respected name
in travel
for almost 50 years,
congratulates
Town Topics
on its
50th Anniversary issue,
and wishes to
thank our many
satisfied customers
past and present.

Let us continue to be your one-stop Travel Store

KULLER TRAVEL CO.
108 Nassau Street
Princeton, NJ
924-2550 • 800-870-2550
Monday-Friday: 9-5:30; Saturday: 10-2

As Time Goes By

April 7, 1947,
Kuller opens
for business at
28 W. State Street,
Trenton, N.J.

July 6, 1948,
Kuller moves
to Princeton at
134 Nassau Street

May 27, 1952,
Kuller moves
to 82 Nassau Street,
2nd floor
(over the Balt)

June 29, 1959,
Kuller moves
to present location
at 108 Nassau Street

We Nominate:

(Reprinted from October 19, 1947)

J. Robert Oppenheimer, one of the world's most distinguished physicists, wartime director of this nation's atomic bomb laboratory at Los Alamos, N.M. and now director of Princeton's unique Institute for Advanced Study. Designated as Frank Aydelotte's successor last spring, the 43-year old Oppenheimer this week formally took over the reins of the 17-year old Institute that was founded with Bamberger department-store millions to provide opportunity for special research for eminent post-graduates.

Elected to the New York Mineralogical Society at the age of 11 and a graduate of Harvard, where he completed the four-year undergraduate course in three years, Oppenheimer and his brilliant career symbolize the sudden dawn of the atomic age. In 1942 he was virtually unknown outside of scientific circles.

Three years later, when he resigned as guiding genius of the nerve center of the Manhattan Project, he was popularly recognized for "his boundless energy," rare common sense," and "tremendous organizational abilities," and was looked upon as the one man who could have taken in stride "three years of the most intense mental strain any man ever had to undergo."

The unvarnished account of Oppenheimer's successes in implementing atomic energy for military purposes is one of the sagas of the war era. Equipment had to be shuttled to the bare desert installation from all parts of the country, including three train carloads of apparatus from Princeton, a cyclotron from Harvard and generators from Wisconsin. But, long before the war's end, Oppenheimer had moulded into a team an extraordinary galaxy of scientific stars as well as 6,000 scientific and military workers. Throughout the hectic period, according to reports, "the main decisions were Oppenheimer's and all proved to be correct."

Occasionally addicted to porkpie hats, interested in horses and versed in eight languages, Oppenheimer after the war returned to his twin professorships at California and California Institute for Technology. His efforts to rediscover the more serene ways of peace were in vain, for his hard-won knowledge and understanding were needed in drafting "scientific legislation and in zeroing in on the Atomic Energy Commission."

For giving everything of himself to the development of the atomic bomb so that countless thousands of lives could be spared; for his demonstrated ability in inspiring the work of others; for radiating the kind of dynamic energy that bodes well both for the institute and for Princeton; he is TOWN TOPICS' nominee for:

Princeton's
MAN OF THE WEEK

Big Time in the Old Town

(Reprinted from June 15, 1947)

During the next five days, history will be written large in Princeton annals. The scope of the university's bicentennial celebration, the impressive pageantry, the big names due here from all parts of the world, will make the long-awaited program one no living Princetonian is likely to see duplicated.

Reunions and the colorful alumni P-rade, generally the main show in June, are just an introductory chapter this year. Saturday night will bring a two-hour musical and dramatic program to be enacted on the front campus. Jose Ferrer, Class of 1934, will serve as narrator, describing highlights of the university's two centuries, with songs that have been favorites through the years sung by alumni stars of operatic and concert stages.

Sunday's feature will be the Boston Symphony Orchestra's concert in the new $2 million Dillon Gymnasium. Monday afternoon will see delegates from 400 educational institutions (140 from foreign lands) present greetings to Dr. Harold W. Dodds in an Alexander Hall ceremony. A dinner for 2,000 will be served that evening in Dillon.

Tuesday is the day of climax. The academic procession of 1,000 in which President Harry S Truman will march will form in Holder Hall courtyard at 10:15, and cover part of the picturesque campus before reaching Nassau Street. The route will then follow Nassau to Fitzrandolph gateway, where it will enter the bicentennial amphitheater. Barriers along which spectators may take places will be erected in accordance with Secret Service regulations.

In the line of march will be such figures as Chief Justice Vinson, Cardinal Tisserant of the Vatican, three senators (Smith, Barclay and Hawkes), Governor Driscoll, Viscount Alexander, Canada's governor-general; Secretary Forrestal, Herbert Hoover, Admirals King and Nimtz and General Eisenhower.

Borough Mayor Minot Morgan has proclaimed Tuesday a town holiday, will close all municipal offices, and hopes businesses and professional offices will follow suit. Motor vehicles will be barred from Nassau Street until 2 pm, on University Place, on Witherspoon north to Hulfish and throughout Palmer Square.

President Truman will be the 13th chief executive to receive an honorary degree from Princeton (only such award ever conferred in absentia went to Abraham Lincoln in 1864). Truman's address will go out over four national networks, a major television system and via the press releases of three score Washington correspondents accompanying him here.

ONCE UPON A TIME THEY RAN THE TOWNSHIP: In January, 1951 Township officials posed for this picture. In front were Martin Clausen, clerk and police chief and B. Franklin Bunn, committee member, both retiring after decades of service. Behind were Joseph Nini, the new clerk; John H. Wallace, Jr., committeeman; Albert Salzman, committee chairman; Bertrand L. Gulick, Jr., new committee member; and Louis R. Gerber, attorney and magistrate.

VIEDT'S

will reopen

Friday Morning, August 8th

Remember Viedt's is "air-conditioned" for your enjoyment!

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• Handbags • Accessories

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LeSportsac

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mon-wed 10-6 • thurs-fri 10-8:30 • sat 10-6 • sun 12-5

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Full Service Catering Needs

Wishing the best to Town Topics on your 50th Anniversary

HOME OF THE CAMERON GALLERY
Exhibiting flower and landscape photographs by Floyd Limbos
Starting Saturday, March 16.
14 Farber Rd., Suite D, Princeton, 609-987-2600
(Located one block south of Marketfair Mall)

– always rising to the occasion –

We Thank These Stores for Supporting Town Topics for 50 Years

by Jean Stratton

The following stores and businesses have been in Princeton since the early days of *Town Topics* and even before. They differ widely in merchandise and type of services. What they share is a commitment to quality products, customer consideration, and support of *Town Topics* every week for almost all of its 50 years.

Many are family businesses, which have been passed down through the generations. All have remained competitive by adapting to changing times, tastes, and needs, while retaining the individual qualities which make them unique. Above all, they have stood the test of time.

Luttmann's, 20 Witherspoon Street, is an authentic Princeton institution. Its reputation for the very highest quality leather goods has been unsurpassed since its establishment as a harness shop in 1904.

Son of a harness-maker in Dayton, F.W. Luttmann opened his own shop at 134 Nassau Street, and continued to operate it in different locations for 70 years. In the early days, the business focused on harnesses for horses and related equipment. In time, as the automobile became a factor, Mr. Luttmann added trunks, bags, suitcases, and dog furnishings.

In a report for Princeton's Oral History Archive, Mr. Luttmann recalled, "Princeton was a real horse and buggy town when I got here. I remember Nassau Street was a dirt street with hitching posts....When I bought this shop in 1904, there was only one car here, and that was Moses Taylor Pyne's — only one car in Princeton.....When the automobiles first came along, oh boy, they scared a lot of horses. To tell the truth, I felt a little bit jittery about them myself."

In scenes reminiscent of this year, Mr. Luttmann remembered snowy winters when traffic was barred on Nassau Street, so people could race their horse-drawn sleighs!

He also recalled customers, such as former President and Mrs. Grover Cleveland, Woodrow Wilson, and Princeton University. Repairing the saddles for the University polo team's ponies was another area of expertise.

Luttmann's current owner, Frank Ricatto, notes that Mr. Luttmann began to expand the merchandise in the 1920s. He purchased leather for the harnesses from tanneries in Newark, and eventually he brought in ready-made leather handbags. He also made trunks, and this led to luggage.

Generations of shoppers have appreciated the quality and service at Luttmann's, which today is noted for its extensive selection of fine leather goods, including handbags, wallets, business cases, appointment books and luggage, as well as high quality pens.

"The people of Princeton and the surrounding area have supported the store over a long period of time," says Mr. Ricatto. "Just taking the past 50 years, when you consider all the economic and political events of that time, the store survived it all, and still maintains its primary focus — quality leather. 50 years is a long time, but quality is ageless. Our focus is on quality that represents a true value, which is what Mr. Luttmann himself did. The Luttmann tradition continues."

Harry Ballot Clothiers — a Princeton landmark — is not only Princeton's longest-established store for men, but New Jersey's as well. Now in its 72nd year, it is widely known for its knowledgeable staff, fine tailoring, and outstanding selection of classic clothing and accessories.

Now located at 20 Nassau Street, the store was originally opened in 1924 on Witherspoon Street. Owner David Wendroff is the nephew of founder, Harry Ballot, and the son of former owner, Abraham (Abe) Wendroff.

"Harry Ballot was a ready-to-wear business. Most men's shops that had started at the turn of the century were tailor shops," recalls Mr. Wendroff.

"My father joined Harry Ballot in 1931, and became owner in 1962," he says. "It was a general men's shop, and when I used to come in as a boy, there were lots of dress hats. I remember a whole wall of hats."

Mr. Wendroff left for graduate school in 1961, and later returned to join his father at the store in 1979. "We were co-managers, and then I became owner when he died in 1987. Working with my father was my greatest pleasure, and I miss him. Many people who come in remember my dad. Now, I am so pleased that my son Danyel will be at the store, too.

"We still have customers who started with us in the 1930s," adds Mr. Wendroff. "We always had a lot of University students, and lots of alumni come back to see us during Reunions. Sometimes they're looking for things they bought when they were here. One man from the Class of '57 was still wearing a Harry Ballot coat he had received for graduation."

Mr. Wendroff also recalls many customers from The Institute for Advanced Study, including the most famous — Albert Einstein.

"He came for sweaters, and we still have the red leather chair he sat in after he was offered the Presidency of Israel, and discussed it with Harry Ballot."

It's New to Us: DuMont Teleset

(Reprinted from June 1, 1948)

The biggest, best and latest in that newest of fields, television, is now seeable and buyable in Princeton at Nassau Appliance, 252 Nassau Street. Television itself is a mysterious miracle to us; this DuMont way of presenting it is a wonder per se.

A triumph of design and space economy is the classic-styled cabinet available in mahogany, knotty pine or maple, which was dreamed up by a leading furniture designer, and contains television, FM, standard and short wave broadcast and phonograph with automatic record changer.

The "Teleset" will be installed and in operation next week at Nassau Appliance, which has issued an invitation to anyone interested in television, whether he be layman in search of entertainment or expert checking the latest developments, to come and watch.

Changes in style (including a dramatic decrease in dress hats) have occurred over the years, and as Mr. Wendroff says, "Sociological behavior has affected men's buying habits. We sell more sports coats, sports shirts, sweaters, and casual slacks, especially with 'Dress Down' days in business offices now. And we have finally stopped selling garters!

"In many ways," he continues, "Princeton invented 'Dress Down'. You saw lawyers wearing madras jackets in the summer and Harris tweeds in the winter. The irony is that, along with this, there has been a return to hats. We sold every dress hat we had this winter.

"The business is a pleasure," he adds. "I learn something every day about human nature and philosophy."

Claridge Wine & Liquor. "We are a third generation family-owned business. There's a real continuity here. That's what makes it such a unique place."

Owner Paul Kranzler is the grandson of the store's founder, Claire Levine, and the son of former owner, Jeanne Rothar. The store's history dates back to 1939, when Mrs. Levine opened Claridge at 40 Leigh Avenue.

"The name 'Claridge' came from my grandmother's name, Claire," recalls Mr. Kranzler. "She also owned a real estate business on Nassau Street, and she really started the liquor store for my grandfather, Benjamin Levine, and he ran it."

Claridge moved to the Princeton Shopping Center, becoming one of the first businesses there, in 1955. "We had 1200 square feet," notes Mr. Kranzler, "and then later, when my grandfather died, my mother, Jeanne Rothar, expanded the store to 3000 square feet. She became very interested in wine, and really changed it from a little liquor store into a wine shop.

"To me," he continues, "a couple of things make our store special and right for Princeton. We really are a wine shop, and there are actually very few like that. Keeping Claridge a fine wine shop with a large selection of inexpensive but good wines is why we're

Continued on Next Page

Happy 50th!

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On Your 50th ANNIVERSARY

from Hamilton Jewelers

As we celebrate our 84th year, we offer our congratulations to Town Topics on its 50th.

Our very best wishes and thanks to all for 50 years of service to the Princeton community.

The Siegel Family and staff of Hamilton Jewelers

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JEWELERS SINCE 1912

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For further information phone 1-800-5-HAMILTON.

Hamilton Jewelers charge and major credit cards accepted

New To Us

Continued from Preceding Page

successful.

"Also, we have long-time, knowledgeable people here. Tony Scott was hired by my grandfather in 1963, and he is still here. Angelo Gonnella, the manager, came in 1962, and he is now in his 33rd year at the store. How many people can say that?"

Mr. Kranzler, who used to help out at the store when he was a boy, became owner in 1991, after the death of his mother.

"We've had many wonderful customers, who have been with us a lot of years," he reports. "The University's Class of '37 is one of our great customers. They always come to us for Reunions. I especially enjoy it when customers come in, and we hang out and talk. This happens a lot at Claridge. We have great conversations."

And, Claridge will continue to be there for quality, service — and — conversation. The store has signed a 10-year lease with the shopping center.

A TASTE OF THE GRAPE: Shown left to right, Paul Kranzler, owner, and Angelo Gonnella and Tony Scott of Claridge Wine & Liquor, are ready to offer customers their favorite wine, beer, or spirits. Mr. Gonnella and Mr. Scott have each worked at the store (which was opened by Mr. Kranzler's grandmother, Claire Levine) for more than 30 years.

N. C. Jefferson Plumbing & Heating is on the job when you see those bright yellow trucks around town.

"The yellow trucks are very popular," explains owner Bruce Jefferson. "They were my father's idea. He wanted nice bright trucks so everyone could see us."

N. C. Jefferson Heating & Plumbing is a family operation. Norton Jefferson started the business in 1947, his brother, Bob Jefferson worked with him, and Bruce Jefferson grew up in the business, becoming owner eight years ago.

"Originally, we were out on Cherry Valley Road," he recalls. "Then four years ago, we moved to 190 Witherspoon Street, which is the same location as the showroom for our Jefferson Bath & Kitchen business.

"Our family has been in Princeton for 90 years," he adds. "We all went to school here, and Princeton is home."

The plumbing business has changed over the years," he reports. "Generally, it's a little more maintenance-free now, but then replacements are more expensive. No more $.10 washers! Also, the regulations are much stiffer regarding operating a business.

"In addition, to get a license, plumbers now need five years of apprenticeship, which includes on-the-job work and two nights at school. Next, there are two years as a journeyman. And then, they take the exam. It's intense.

"Also, now I send my guys to heating school. The technology has changed so much."

Some things don't change, however, he adds. The company still does a lot of residential work, along with commercial jobs. As he says, "Everyone needs a plumber. We have 24-hour service, and we get lots of problems in severe cold or heat, such as this winter and last summer. Frozen and broken pipes in the cold, and air conditioning problems in the summer.

"My best customer is the weekend home handyman, who tries to do some repair work himself. Then we go over and fix it," he smiles. "Also, we always get lots of rings dropped down the sink.

"We still see lots of kids stopping up toilets, too," he continues. "I had a case where this toilet was stopped up, and I eventually found three toothbrushes in it. The kid didn't want to brush his teeth, and kept putting the toothbrushes in the toilet. You see everything, and every day is a little different!

"Most of all, we have always worked hard to give good service, and I think our reputation reflects that."

Rosedale Mills at 274 Alexander Street is like stepping back in time — in the very nicest way. While completely up-to-date and computerized, the store has an easy-going general store type of atmosphere. Customers can take time to talk with manager Doug Cromwell and the staff, or with each other. And every now and then, the familiar sound of the train whistle cuts through the air, as the Dinky rumbles by on the tracks just adjacent to Rosedale.

A favorite place for generations of Princetonians, Rosedale Mills specializes in pet supplies, animal feed, and garden supplies. It has a long history, dating to the 1800s, and it is a true family business. Doug Cromwell is owner John Hart's son-in-law, and Mr. Hart's

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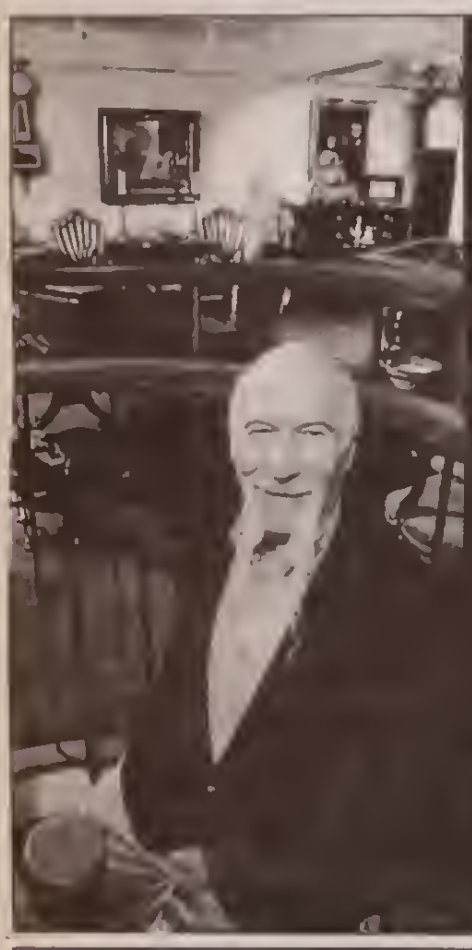

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50% OFF COUNTRY WOOD BLINDS
1" & 2"

60% OFF NEW LIGHTLINES™ MINIS
with dustgard & hidden route holes

60% OFF NEW PASSAGES™ VERTICALS *Plus* FREE VALANCE

60% OFF DUETTE® *Plus* 5% EXTRA ON 3/8" CLASSIC

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WINDOW FASHIONS

WINDOW ACCENTS DESIGN CENTER

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429 Wall Street • Rt. 206 Research Park • (Across from Princeton Airport)

New To Us

Continued from Preceding Page

two sons and daughter operate Rosedale's Pennington store.

The original Rosedale Mills, a saw mill and feed supply business, was located on Carter Road along Stony Brook, near Rosedale Road, explains Mr. Hart's wife, office manager, Betty Hart.

"It used to make flour, grind feed and cut ice," recalls Mr. Hart. "The mill may have derived its name from the abundance of wild roses in the area."

Mr. Hart's grandfather, Joseph Hunt, owned the mill from 1902 until 1943, when it was moved to Alexander Street by new owner William Dorman. In 1950, Mr. Hart and Milton Cranstoun, who had been boyhood friends, purchased it, and the primary business then was feed for cattle.

In the early 1960s, the focus changed, as farms began to give way to developers, remembers Mrs. Hart. "The store had to shift sales from a rural to suburban focus. The first major change was adding lawn and garden products. In addition, feed for all animals, pet foods and supplies, and bird feed and feeders, among a variety of other products, were emphasized."

"We want to be recognized as continuing the old-fashioned service," continues Mrs. Hart. "We are committed to customer satisfaction, and strive to provide a stress-free buying experience. Prices are competitive, and the advice we give about gardening or your animals' welfare and diet is honest.

"If it's been a long time, or if you've never been to Rosedale Mills, come and see us. This is an original establishment, one that truly likes to help 'do-it-yourselfers'!"

Verbeyst, Inc., the French dry cleaner at 12 South Tulane Street, can clean it all, and has been for a very long time — from stuffed animals to sleeping bags and lamp shades to tapestries and antique wedding and christening gowns.

"We started out on East State Street in Trenton," recalls Louis Verbeyst, whose father, Frank Verbeyst, and his uncle began the business, known as Verbeyst & Beddiges in 1899.

Mr. Verbeyst became sole owner, and moved the business to Princeton in 1910. "The shop was located in a building with a fish market then, in the alley just off Witherspoon Street. "My father stayed there four or five years," adds Mr. Verbeyst. "Then, during World War I, he moved to the corner of South Tulane and Nassau Streets, and in 1932, we came to this building."

That it has truly been a family business is evidenced by the different generations involved in its operation. Louis Verbeyst took over in 1945, after service in World War II, and then in 1983, his son, Ken Verbeyst, assumed responsibility for the firm.

FAMILY FOOTWEAR: "We'd like to thank our customers for their loyalty. They have supported us over the years, and we really appreciate it. We also have many employees of long-standing." Hulit's Shoes' manager, Joan Walsh (left) and owners, Chuck and Phyllis Simone look forward to more years of serving the community and providing shoes for the whole family.

"I like the diversity," says Ken Verbeyst. "There is always something different to do, and it's hands-on. There is also a variety of things brought in — from jeans to leather of every color and shape to World War I army uniforms.

"Also, you never know what you'll find," he adds. "Money, jewelry, pens, keys, papers are all typical, but we have also found garter belts and underwear in pockets! Now, we get credit cards and computer disks, too. We double check every pocket before cleaning, and let the owners know."

The business has changed dramatically from the early days, when "at one time, we had one tub for cleaning, with benzene, and three other tubs for rinsing, and everything was scrubbed by hand. In those days, we specialized in the Princeton University students' white flannel trousers and navy blue jackets," notes Louis Verbeyst.

Such prominent Princetonians as Woodrow Wilson and Grover Cleveland, as well as numerous New Jersey governors, have been among those whose clothes were cleaned by Verbeyst. The firm also served the Princeton Triangle Show, and continues to do work for McCarter Theatre and the Princeton Ballet.

Verbeyst's long-time success is due to the company's emphasis on quality and service, believes Ken Verbeyst. "We specialize in French dry cleaning, which has taken on the definition of the hand work involved and the use of the petroleum-based Stoddard solvent. We're the only petroleum-based plant in Princeton" he explains. "We think it does the best job. It's gentler and easier on the clothes."

Hulit's Shoes, 142 Nassau Street, is a Princeton tradition. The store has provided generations of Princetonians with footwear, and with changes peppering the town seemingly non-stop, it offers a sense of continuity and durability, as well as a fine selection of shoes for the entire family.

Founded in 1929 by Warren Hulit, the store has been a Nassau Street mainstay, leaving only temporarily after a damaging fire in 1974, when it relocated for several months to Witherspoon Street.

Family members have been actively involved in the store through the years. Warren's sons, Ralph and Pete Hulit, were known to many shoppers, and his daughters, Nellie Meyers and Lillian Hall, were on hand, too. His daughter Clara Hulit and her husband, Charlie Simone, also in the store, were the parents of current owner, Chuck Simone.

"I started working part-time in high school, and then full-time in 1971. In 1987, my wife Phyllis and I became the owners," he says. "This store serves the entire family. That is sort of a dying breed these days. The whole thing here is to stress service. We try hard to do this, to help people out. It's not self-service. We make a special effort to fit the shoe. We know how to fit children's shoes, for example."

Children have been the source of some of Hulit's most memorable moments over the years, he adds. "They really seem to like to run around in our windows, and of course, we often have lots of kids in here, especially during back to school time. One day in the '70s, a lady came in with five kids, and it was a really busy day, with people all around. After she left, she called us, and said 'Is my son there?' She had left one of her kids here, and we found him sitting happily on the chair!"

Hulit's has seen many children grow up over the years, he adds. "We have so many families coming in, and we've gotten to know them. We now see their children and even the great-grandchildren of customers from the early days. We have some fourth generation customers."

The more informal life-style of society in general has been reflected in the shoe business, and as Mr. Simone says, comfort is the key.

"People want to be comfortable today, and this is true in dress shoes, too," he notes. "Also, casual shoes are often made to look like stylish walking shoes now. We also have shoes from all over the world, especially Europe."

The store's large clientele of international customers, however, likes to buy American-made shoes, he reports. What they all seem to appreciate most is Hulit's special brand of personal service.

"We offer a lot of personal attention," says Mr. Simone, "and I think people like the way they are treated here."

Princeton Fuel Oil, 220 Alexander Street, has served the Princeton area for more than 60 years, providing year-round comfort in a friendly and professional manner.

The company was started in 1934 by Joe Hoff, and at that time the major means of heating was coal.

"By 1946, it had made the transition from

Continued on Next Page

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New To Us

Continued from Preceding Page

coal to oil," says general manager, Ed Griffin. "Oil is considered the most efficient, and it's easier and not as dirty as coal."

Residential work was the main focus of Princeton Fuel Oil's business, but over the years, it has added many commercial and institutional clients, including hotels, restaurants, churches and businesses.

In addition, the company began to accommodate people's warm weather needs, and air conditioning is an important part of the business.

Many customers include third and fourth generations of the original families Princeton Fuel Oil served.

"Service is the primary goal," says Mr. Griffin. "As we grow and change, we remain the same. We are committed to the home comfort market, and we never forget that we aren't selling products; we're selling service; we're selling comfort; we're selling security."

Long-time employee Maryann Szedula agrees, and remembers an incident which reflects the company's commitment to its customers. "We had a particular credit manager, who had a reputation as tough and heartless. She was calling a customer to say we couldn't make another delivery since the customer hadn't paid. Well, it ended up that not only was the delivery made, but she sent them a turkey for Thanksgiving!"

Adds Mr. Griffin: "During the January blizzard this year, I made it in, and we were so busy we put our servicemen in four-wheel drive trucks so they could get to people. Then, we got a call from Princeton Township saying that their buddies in West Windsor had run out of diesel fuel for their snow plows. So we got some out to them and also some to the Township police, who needed it, too.

Princeton Fuel Oil, which has been owned for 20 years by the F.C. Haab Company, services Princeton and the surrounding area. Over the years, it has acquired a number of other oil companies in the area.

"The company functions as a local company, and all our employees are from the area," points out Mr. Griffin. "When we acquire other local companies, they retain their local identity and employees. But now they are able to draw upon our additional resources.

"We have also always tried to be involved in the community and be a good neighbor. It's service that sets us apart. Service to the community, service to our customers. This is why we have survived."

Urken Hardware & Design has it all! As Princeton shoppers have discovered over the past 59 years, this family-owned store at 27 Witherspoon Street specializes in personal attention, while providing updated interior design service, supplies for remodeling and renovating, as well as all the basics of the traditional hardware store.

"My father and mother, Paul and Eunice Urken, actually started it as a glass company in 1937," explains owner, Irv Urken. "Then, they began to add hardware, housewares, and even toys."

The building dates to 1915, adds Mr. Urken. "It was originally a restaurant, McCloskey's Oyster House, and in parenthesis, it said ("Tables For Ladies").

HELP FOR THE HOME: "Lots of customers come in and want to try things out, and we try to accommodate them. People like to spend time looking around, and they often ask for advice, which we are pleased to provide." Irv Urken, owner of Urken Hardware & Design, looks forward to helping customers when they visit his store, which opened in 1937.

"I grew up at the store," he recalls, "but for a while, I wanted to be a lawyer or politician. During my senior year at college, I interned with Congressman Frank Thompson in Washington, and later, I became a two-term Borough Councilman before moving to the Township."

But coming back to the store seemed the natural thing to do, and Mr. Urken was there fulltime by 1973, working with his mother, later becoming owner in 1986.

"We started to make changes, and it began to evolve," he explains. "When my wife, Cindy, became involved, we had a new perspective, and we added interior design and remodeling services."

He says that the store's hands-on demonstrations are fun both for customers and for him. "We've had outdoor barbecue demos and Makita power tool demos. People love to try everything out.

"Also," he continues, "We even had a Cub Scout meeting at the store. My son is a Cub, and one of his merit badge requirements was to learn about tools. So we had 10 eight and nine-year-olds, plus some parents, and they learned all about the different hammers, saws, molley bolts, etc., and they had a great time."

Customers have been coming to Urken's for many years, including some who remember the early days of the store.

"I've seen customers' families grow up, and the long-time customers have seen me grow up," says Mr. Urken, with a smile.

"We're always willing to give assistance and advice," he adds. "We've always had great products, great prices, and great service. You can buy a pack of light bulbs anywhere, but when you need special advice and help, you want to go to a place where you know the product is good and where you won't be ripped off.

"People count on us. They know we'll do it right. It's trust, and that kind of trust is built up over the years."

Continued on Page 20

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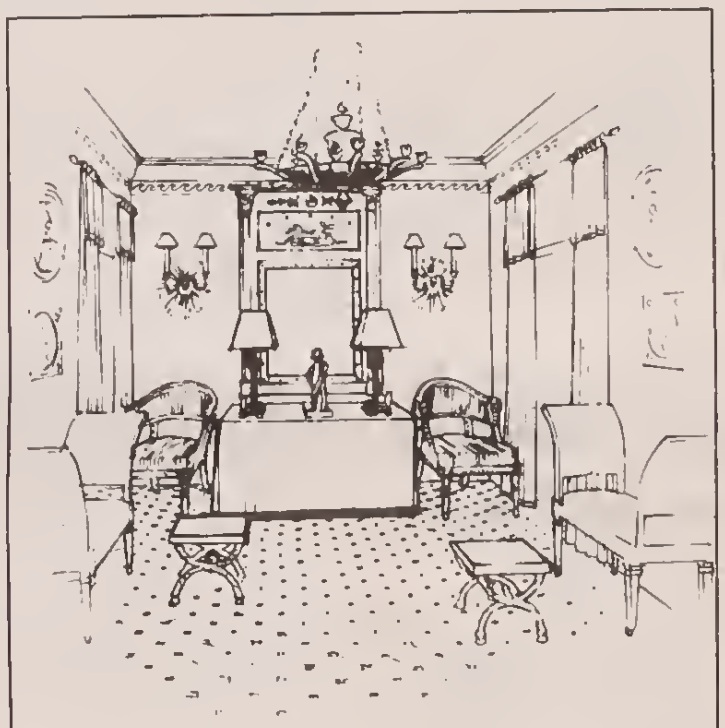

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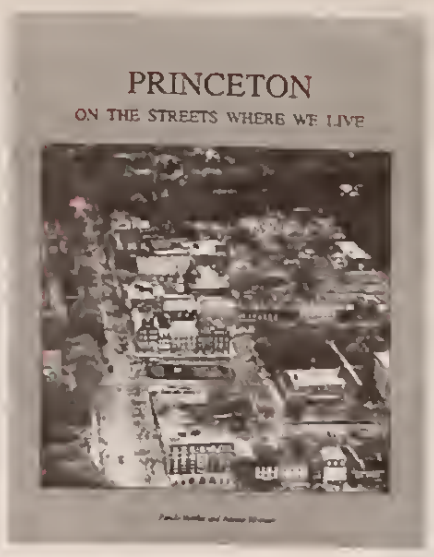
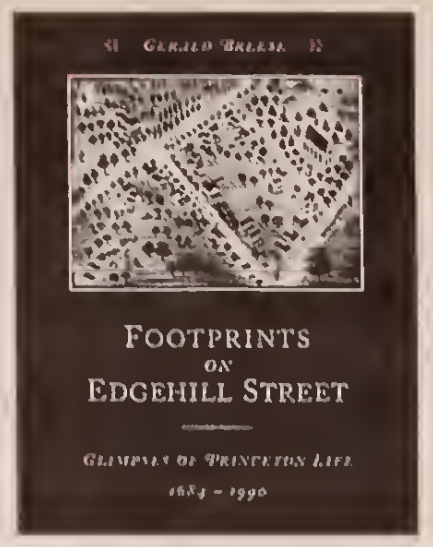
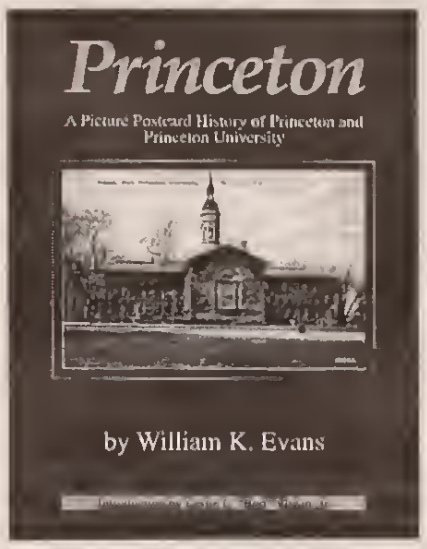


Princeton: On the Streets Where We Live. Randy Hobler and Jeanne Silvester. Paper, $5.00.



Footprints on Edgehill Street: Glimpses of Princeton Life 1684–1990. Gerald Breese. Paper, $16.95.



Princeton: A Picture Postcard History of Princeton and Princeton University. William K. Evans. Paper, $18.95.

Drumthwacket: A History of the Governor's Mansion at Princeton, New Jersey. William K. Selden. Paper, $12.50.

The First Seventy-Five Years: A History of the Medical center at Princeton, 1919-1994. Harvey Rothberg. Paper, $19.50.

You can count on the U-Store to have an outstanding selection of books on Princeton—not only of Princeton University, as it celebrates its 250th anniversary, but of Princeton town as well. Shown here are some of the titles which we think will be of special interest to current residents and expatriates alike.

Princeton. Robert Gambee. Cloth, $39.95. Paper, $24.95

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New To Us

Continued from Page 18

Peterson's Nursery, Garden Center & Landscaping. "When I was six years old, my father went out back to pick blueberries, and I sold them. Every year, we had a garden, and I sold farm fresh fruits and vegetables. Then we started selling flowers."

That was in 1939, says Charles Peterson, and his early entry into business proved so successful that he built his fledgling operation into his nursery at 3730 Lawrenceville Road (Route 206).

"I was determined as a child to make this successful," he recalls. "Everything here was earned. It has taken hard work, long hours, creativity, and artistic talent.

"My parents helped me greatly over the years," he continues. "When I was in the army, my father left his contracting and steam fitting trade to run the fruit and vegetable business. Later, I bought the property next to us, and developed the nursery and landscaping and garden center. We've always offered top-of-the-line quality, and have we been busy! There were times when we would sell 5,000 ears of corn on a Saturday!"

A stint in his early twenties as a professional drummer (still a hobby today), was enjoyable, but did not lure him from what he had begun to create at Peterson's, and he was determined to expand the business even further.

"We've added a lot along the way," he explains. "Orchids are now a specialty for us, as well as bonsai. We also build unique water gardens, and do a lot of estate-type landscaping. We worked on the property of the late President Marcos of the Philippines when he was here."

Mr. Peterson is very proud of the garden center's increasing effort to use natural pesticides. As he says, "We began to commit to natural pesticides and controls 30 years ago. I brought in nearly 100,000 ladybugs each week (we have saturated Mercer County with ladybugs!). We haven't used a chemical pesticide inside our building in nearly 10 years."

Though Peterson's has been a shopping stop for famous customers, such as James Cagney, Pat O'Brien, Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward, and Joe Dimaggio and Marilyn Monroe, it is the fact that it has remained a family business and survived increased competition that pleases Mr. Peterson most.

"One of my biggest pleasures is that my daughter, Liz Peterson, is now president of Peterson's Nursery," he says. "She is very artistic and very capable. Also, my son Charlie Peterson III is 13, and is extremely ambitious and willing to learn.

"I've had a very full, busy, and successful life," he adds. "I enjoy the blessings of a good family and good health, as well as the loyalty of customers who have contributed greatly to Peterson's success."

Nassau Interiors is uniquely appealing because you know it will be there — in the same place, with the same traditional, old world service it has been giving customers for more than 50 years.

"My father came from Italy in 1917," recalls owner Leonard LaPlaca. "He was in the importing business for a while in New York, and then he moved to Monmouth Junction and became a produce farmer. He sold vegetables to the A & P, Toto's Market, Hill's Market, Bamman's, and Lahiere's Restaurant.

"We also served private customers, and it was then that I met a man who had an interior design shop on the corner of Nassau and Harrison Streets. I worked for him, and found that I liked it. Then, later, I bought the business."

That was in 1942, and a few years later, Nassau Interiors moved to its current location, 162 Nassau Street.

"Originally, we had no stock, just samples and catalogs," explains Mr. LaPlaca. "It was a gradual build-up. At one point, the owner of The Cummins Shop ran out of space for his lamp shades, so he offered his stock to me. Learning the tastes of customers and how people lived was the basis of the selection."

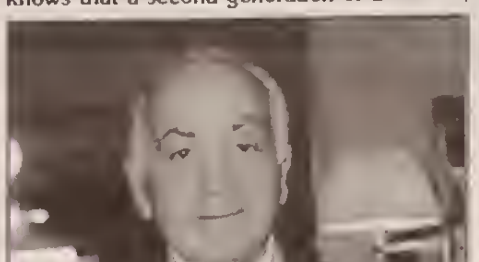
Mr. LaPlaca has always enjoyed having his family participate in the business. His wife, Laurel, and three daughters, Laurie, Claudia, and Trinna have all been involved in the store.

"My wife, Laurel, was very active in the business, as well as bringing up our daughters," he notes. "She had an extensive art background, with a special interest in interior design. And she has exquisite taste. Together, we made quite a team!"

Mr. LaPlaca has especially enjoyed buying for the store. "I like to make the choices at the furnishings markets in New York and North Carolina, and I've been fortunate to pick out merchandise that people have liked. We have made some accommodations to changing times and tastes, but we still maintain our original concept in quality and style.

"Sometimes, I wonder why, after a half-century, I am even more excited about the work, and I'm doing it part-time now," he says. "It's still exciting to be here, it's still a challenge, and each day is different."

And now, when he spends half of his time at the family farm in Virginia, Mr. LaPlaca knows that a second generation of LaPlacas, daughters Claudia and Trinna, will continue the Nassau Interiors spirit and tradition in the fields of design and retail.



FINE FURNISHINGS: Leonard LaPlaca is pleased that his family has always been involved in Nassau Interiors, his home furnishings and design store. "When she was a girl, my wife, Laurel, used to come to Princeton with her parents. They often drove by a house on Library Place, and she thought she'd like to live there. Her father said it would take an awful lot of furniture to fill that house, and Laurel replied that she'd probably marry someone in the furniture business!"

English Shop founder and former owner, Eric Mihan, Sr., recalls, "The luckiest day of my life was a beautiful spring day in April of 1942, when I got off the Dinky, and walked to Nassau Street."

Mr. Mihan never regretted his decision to leave New York City and come to Princeton. "I had two little boys, and I wanted to get out of New York. I looked around, and then a chance came to work in Princeton."

Those "two little boys", Eric, Jr. and Herb, now owners of the store, are proudly carrying on the tradition begun by their father when he opened The English Shop at Palmer Square West in 1951 (now located at 32 Nassau Street.)

Before that, however, Mr. Mihan worked at a variety of jobs, including managing the Princeton University tailoring shop. He did the buying there, in particular, imported woolens. He also dealt with many English importers, whom he came to admire.

The choice of The English Shop as the name of his store reflects this, and as he says, "Princeton was a very Anglophile town then. It's been a good choice."

Originally concentrating exclusively on men's clothing, the shop began to introduce some women's items in 1957, when it moved to its current location on Nassau Street.

The emphasis of The English Shop has always been classic, traditional clothing, and its focus on quality has continued, as it has adapted to the buying tastes of a more informal society.

"The merchandise moved in the direction of more informal wear," notes Eric Mihan, Jr., with sports coats, sports shirts, and sweaters becoming more popular.

Adds Herb Mihan, "The high tech industry has contributed to it, too. People are more involved with work, not so much with clients and dressing in a certain way. And also, millions now work in home offices."

Whatever the times or trends, The English Shop customers have remained loyal. "We have seen customers grow up and new generations come in," says Eric.

Continued on Next Page

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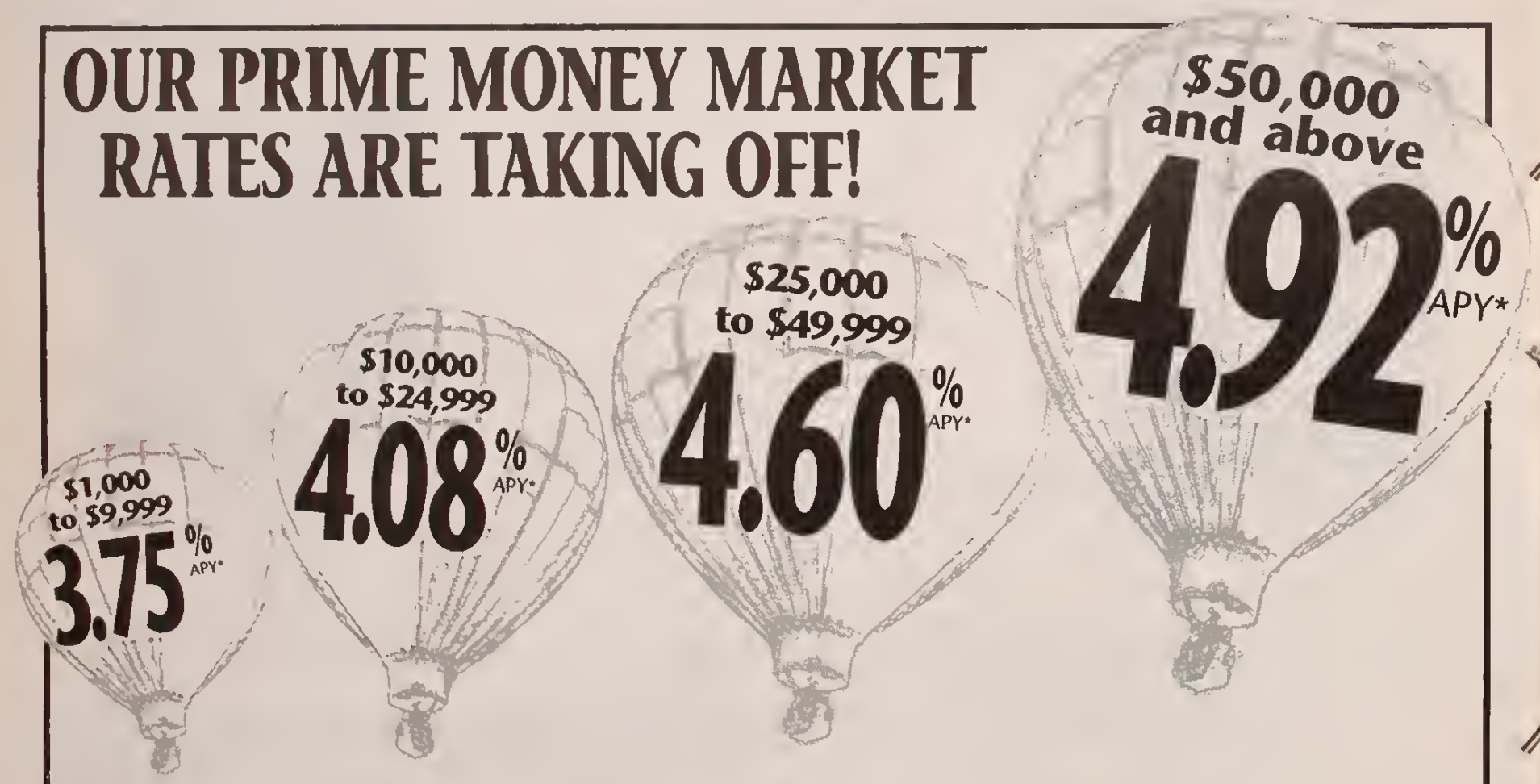

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BEST BROTHERS: Eric Mihan, Jr. (wearing his signature bow tie) and Herb Mihan (in his customary braces), owners of The English Shop, are proud of the store's fine reputation for classic men's clothing. "During all these years, we have had many customers of long-standing, including people who regularly come from New York or Philadelphia to get the look we offer. We want to say thank you to everyone. We appreciate your loyalty."

New To Us

Continued from Preceding Page

Just as the customers have seen the Mihan brothers grow up in the store.

"When I was a kid, I didn't know I was going to do this," says Herb. "Then, in my early twenties, I realized how much it meant to me that my father had started the store, and that my brother and I had an opportunity to continue it and see it grow. It really was the American Dream.

"Also, the daily working relationship with my father and brother was very satisfying. The three of us were very different in many respects, and we complemented each other. We had different opinions naturally, but I can't recall any insurmountable problems. We could always be completely honest with each other.

"We would also like to add that there are very few communities in the entire country where you have as fantastic a clientele as that in Princeton. It is really a tremendous experience having dealt with such a wide variety of people who are so accomplished in their own right. We don't think there is a better retail experience than in this town."

Sturhahn, Dickenson & Bernard CEO John Bernard says, "You have to be a certain kind of person for this work. You have to enjoy working with people, and basically be friendly and happy."

Located on the second floor of the Rider Furniture business at 14 Main Street in Kingston, Mr. Bernard works with his son, Jay Bernard, who is president and in charge of the day-to-day operation.

"We're an independent insurance agent," adds Mr. Bernard, who was a founder of the company in 1969.

"The company was actually started as The Princeton Agency in 1945 by H.C. ("Cobbles") Sturhahn," recalls Mr. Bernard. "It was at 32 Nassau Street, and he was originally a New York broker. But he lived here, and so he opened the company here.

"Mel Dickenson and I started an insurance company in Philadelphia, and then we got together with Mr. Sturhahn. He wanted to connect with someone established. He wanted someone young, and we wanted someone older, so it was a good mix.

"At that time, we changed the name to Sturhahn, Dickenson & Bernard, and for a long time we were located in the old Princeton Bank and Trust building. We've had many regular clients over the years.

Mr. Bernard became sole owner, when he bought out his two partners 20 years ago, and Jay Bernard started full-time in 1980. "I was a ski bum for a while," says Jay, smiling, "and then reality set in.

"Really, the most enjoyable and satisfying part of the business is educating people about insurance and providing coverage and protection for their needs. They can count on the service we offer them, and also on the quality of the companies we represent."

Over the years, both men have seen the business change. "For example we used to write kidnapping coverage, but not anymore, and now our business is 70% personal (home, car, life, health), and 30% commercial," says Jay.

Some things remain, however. "What hasn't changed is that we emphasize service. We sell service, and that's why we're so successful," points out John Bernard. "It's really been a pleasure to be in a business where you can be a straight arrow and succeed. People can count on us for integrity. They trust us. Service and integrity. We hold our heads up high!"

In addition, both Bernards are happy that the business enables them to insure young hockey players nationwide through their client, USA Hockey. The sport is close to their hearts.

"I used to play, and I started Princeton Youth Hockey in 1955. I also coached girls' hockey at Princeton University," says Mr. Bernard. "And in 1980, I was fortunate to be host of the Swedish Olympic team at Lake Placid."

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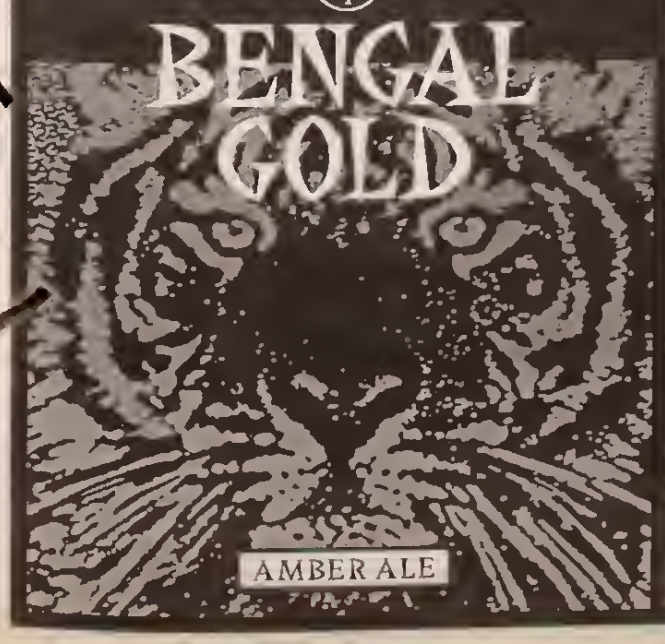

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School Report

(Reprinted from July 27, 1950)

Through their representatives on the Borough Board of Education, the people of Princeton got a fact-crammed report Tuesday night on the manner in which the municipality's public schools had operated during 1949-50. There were many reasons substantiating the comment of supervising principal B. Woodhull Davis that "the year just closed has been the finest in our history."

Among them: receipts in excess of anticipated revenue amounting to $412,700 and expenditures which were some $400 below the amount thought necessary when the budget was made up; a cash balance and assets totalling $78,500, nearly $5,000 above the preceding year.

Enrollment for the past year was 1,810, exactly one pupil higher than the number registered during the preceding year. Elementary facilities are ample for the foreseeable future, he reported, but within a short time expansion of the high school must receive serious consideration.

A sharp increase in enrollment in 1953, which will peak five years later, can be anticipated. The pupils will be the record-breaking crop of "war babies" who put in an appearance between 1941-45.

A Word to the Wise

The British have announced an increase in the cost of Scotch. A corresponding jump in prices here seems likely to follow.

At the moment, we have a good supply of all standard brands at minimum prices. It will pay you to order from us NOW!

Wine & Game Shop

6 Nassau Street Tel. 2468

Free Delivery

What of the Sabbath?

(Reprinted from June 1, 1947)

Four days before what might be one of the quietest primaries in Princeton history, the far-off elections of next November stole the spotlight. Voters of the Borough may at that time express their opinion on an issue guaranteed to stir up interest: shall Princeton repeal its ancient Blue Laws and permit an "open Sunday?"

Awaiting study by the mayor and Council is a petition requesting a referendum on this topic next November 5. If it is found to bear 152 bona fide signatures of the municipality's registered voters — 5% of the 3,031 who voted in 1946 — such a question will appear on the ballot next fall.

Should an affirmative majority be returned, the governing body will then legislate on the extent to which the town may operate bars, taverns, bowling alleys and motion picture theatres. Whatever the fate of the petition and the decision on the referendum, some laws still on Princeton's books are due for repeal: technically it is still forbidden to open a store on Sunday, even to sell a newspaper!

WALKING HOME FROM WORK: Town Topics' photographer Alan Richards took many pictures of Albert Einstein in the 1940's and 50's. Here is one of him leaving the Institute for Advanced Study.

GO FOR Baroque

Funny, you don't look 50!

congrats

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As a community hospital, The Medical Center at Princeton has a tradition of providing the quality health services you need. In addition to emergency, acute, and outpatient care at Princeton Hospital, the Medical Center provides rehabilitation and long term care at Merwick, psychiatry and addictions treatment at Princeton House, same day surgery at Princeton Surgical Center, and a full range of Home Care and Hospice programs.

We offer most of the services that you would expect to find at a major urban medical center and we believe that the services we offer—we do exceptionally well.

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The Marketplace
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Route 34
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Marketplace Hours: Daily 10-6; Thurs & Fri 10-9; Sat 10-6; Sun. 12-5

TT History

Continued from Page 2

incorporating parts of surrounding townships served by the Princeton Post Office.

The staff was increased to keep up with the work load, and all the current features such as obituaries, letters to the editor, engagements and weddings, people in the news, business, plus reviews of plays, concerts and art exhibits were added.

Preston Eckmeder arrived in September, 1959, and set about covering sports, the police beat, selling ads, helping with layout, picking up and delivering papers, and a hundred and one other jobs, all with unfailing good humor. But perhaps his main claim to fame was his ability to operate the old Polaroid camera, producing a decent picture under any kind of conditions.

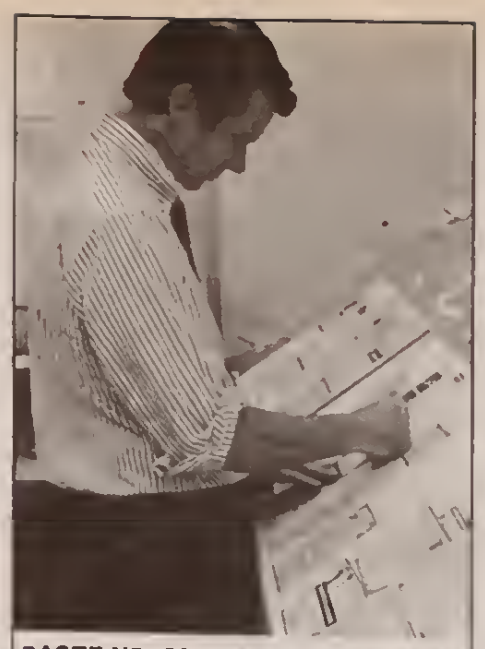
In 1960, desperate for more space, Town Topics took over the entire first floor of 4 Mercer Street, converting a four-room apartment in the back to office use.

New Decade, New Printer

The sixties brought a third printer for Town Topics, Merlo and Sons in Trenton, 20 miles closer to home. A two-month strike by union pressmen at the Mount Holly Herald in the Spring of 1961 had created havoc for the paper. The management of Sleeper Publications was still able to compose and print the paper, but at about half its normal size of 32 pages. Longtime advertisers were told to reduce the size of their ads and others were turned away. News coverage was drastically reduced as well.

Without its own newspaper, Merlo and Sons' main focus was composing and printing Town Topics. Now it was easier to increase the size of the paper to accommodate more news, pictures and advertisements on a weekly basis. As an added bonus, Merlo could print the paper Wednesday morning, moving up Town Topics' publication by 24 hours. This was all to the good, because Princeton was continuing to grow at a rapid rate.

In the 1960's, Town Topics covered a wide variety of topics. At the beginning of the decade, a joint public library and fluoridation of the town's water supply were approved by referendum. Also the largest graduation class in the history of Princeton High held its commencement outside, beginning a new tradition.



PASTE-UP OR WAX-IN? It's called paste-up, but the strips of news laid in the paper by editor Jeb Stuart actually have wax on the back so they'll stick to the page forms. Each week Town Topics has more news and information than it can print, and the editor must decide what gets in and what doesn't.

Land conservation was a serious matter in the Township — the Open Space Committee asked for a municipal effort to save space for public use; Raymond Mondone retired as police chief to be replaced by Peter McCrohan; and Joe Jingoli coached his last game of PHS football in 1961.

In those years, consolidation of Borough and Township continued to be avidly discussed, just as it had in the two previous decades. Route 92-A, "the Princeton Bypass," was another hot topic. So was a leash law for the town's dogs, and unlike the other two, "*that*" came to pass.

Whig and Clio, the University organization that gave Princeton Alger Hiss in the 1950's, provided Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett in the 1960's. The Princeton Association for Human Rights (PAHR) was organized to picket his speech.

Consolidation: Town No/Schools Yes

Toward the mid-60's, the Dilley report concluded that "Consolidation is not practicable at this time," mainly because of the big difference in rateables between Borough and Township. However, consolidation of the municipalities' school systems did get a referendum, with battle lines drawn between the yeas and the nays.

The first vote in 1965 passed in the Township by a 12 to one margin, but failed by 200 votes in the Borough. In June of 1966, a second referendum was held and the Borough joined the Township in agreeing to the merger. But all was not well at the high school, with reports of smoking, drinking and drug use beginning to surface for the first time. It was said: teenagers need a place to go — too much hanging out on the streets.

In 1967 the Borough government moved from one side of Stockton Street to the other into a new building. Princeton Community Housing, an organization of churches and community groups, began to press for low and middle income units in town.

Just a year after the merger, Princeton's teachers were unhappy with the salary offer. And a year later in 1968, taxpayers were not pleased with the figures on the school budget and voted it down for the first time since the late 1930's. They were so upset, they voted down a revised budget a month or so later, and Council and Committee were needed to step in and settle the issue.

Martin Luther King and Robert F. Kennedy were both assassinated; and Princeton had its own tragedy when a young woman teller at Princeton Bank & Trust, Kirsti Pfister, was shot dead during a hold-up attempt. Jose Soto initially escaped, but was captured in New York City several weeks later, and sentenced to life imprisonment.

It's Free and It Isn't

While all this was going on Town Topics discovered that it had to adjust its free circulation policy, as hundreds of papers were being given away at newsstands each week. It instituted a charge of 10 cents per copy there, but continued to circulate the paper to

Continued on Next Page

Municipal Jackpot

(Reprinted from September 21, 1950)

Along about 12:30 Tuesday night in Borough Hall, one man wound up his comments of 15 to 20 minutes duration on parking meters with the remark, "And that's how I feel about it in a nutshell." It was nutshells of that size being rolled at Mayor P. MacKay Sturges that kept the Council meeting going just five minutes short of three hours.

In part, the turnout of more than 100 persons, which necessitated shifting the locale from the Council room to the auditorium was on hand because of the volume of tickets issued since the 463 meters have been installed. In sharp contrast to 88 overtime violations during the entire month of August, the number was expected to reach 1,000 by the end of the current week of September.

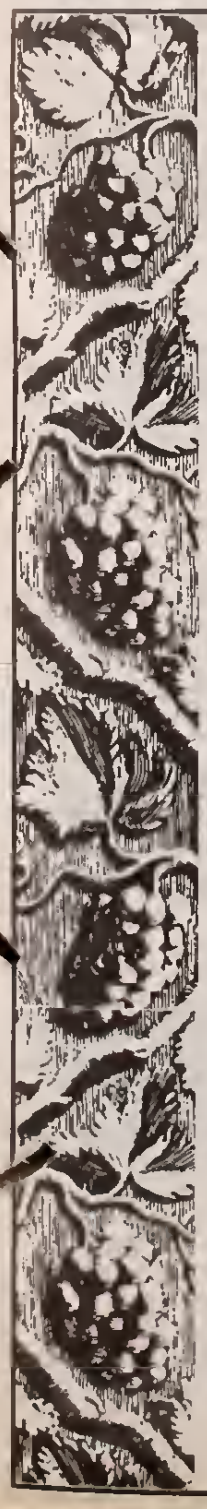
While it was unlikely that the woman who got four overtime parking tickets in a single day was ready to accept the presence of meters, many in Princeton were coming to consider them a worthwhile addition to the community.

With cars still being tagged at the rate of better than 60 a day, irritation still existed and the police were getting a large share of undeserved abuse, much of it just plain mean. One able member of the force commented, "It's gotten so bad, I'm only taking a dollar's worth of tongue-lashing. After that, I do the talking."

But in most cases the stories were on the lighter side. Among them was the one about the man who put the nickel in the meter at the back of the car, instead of the front and insisted he shouldn't be tagged. And another about the college professor who tried for a minute or more to insert a coin in the slot for the key that opens the meters, shook his head and drove off in disgust.

One woman told Magistrate Paul Chesebro that the entire operation of meters was backward. "How can you possibly tell how long you'll be gone from your car?" she asked. "You ought to pay when you come back to it–for the length of time you've been away!"

The comment made at last week's Borough Council meeting on meters is on the way to becoming a classic. Said a local beauty parlor operator, pleading on behalf of his customers that the time on the meters be extended from half to a full hour, "After all, what can you do with a woman in 30 minutes?"



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TT History

Continued from Preceding Page

every home free of charge.

When the 1970's came along, the decision to drop the "We Nominate" feature on the front page was made. Poor health had forced Dan Coyle to cut back on his work load. He took early retirement from the University in the spring of 1973, but never got a chance to enjoy it. He died at his home in Maryland in November of that year at the age of 57. A weekly story of a general nature became the cover feature on the quarter-folded paper.

A New Technique

In November 1973, the paper underwent its most significant change, switching from hot to cold type or offset printing. The technology had advanced to the point where a couple of computers, albeit rather large and bulky, could typeset news and ads a lot faster and cleaner than the huge, rattling linotype machines that employed molten lead. A good linotype operator had a top speed of 14 lines a minute — these computers could set 60.

Compugraphic was making the new computers and the time seemed ripe to make the change. Once again Town Topics had grown to the point where it was overloading its printer in Trenton with the volume of news and ads it wanted to publish. The time and money saved in this move were significant.

Instead of paying someone else to do it miles away, all editorial and advertising copy would be set, proofed and laid out on pages at Mercer Street. Pictures would no longer have to be sent to a photoengraver, who charged to make a plate for each one, but would be turned into "halftones" by a new camera at Town Topics.

Camera ready pages were prepared and taken to a new printer, Somerset Press in Somerville, which had the latest web offset press. The numerous trips back and forth to Trenton were curtailed in favor of just two to Somerville — one to drop off the pages and the other to pick up the first of the finished copies.

HERE FOR 45 OF ITS 50 YEARS: Town Topics moved into this historic,19th-century building at the head of Mercer Street in 1950. There is no printing press inside, but everything else for the newspaper is done here.

That first offset issue, published November 22, 1973 was a learning process for everyone at Town Topics, who previously had watched union compositors do the work. More employees were hired and trained by people who didn't know the system well yet themselves.

Naturally the changeover had to happen in six days, and there had been little time to practice beforehand. Ads were pasted in upside down; others never got in at all; columns of news and classifieds were crooked. Borders were stripped around ads in a haphazard manner, and the lines between classifieds were drawn in with a pen that often smeared the ink. At 4 am Wednesday morning the job was finally done. Each week the time shortened and the overall look improved. Now the paper is put to bed most Tuesday nights by 7 p.m.

During the decade of the 70's Town Topics kept up with numerous stories. University students stormed the Institute for Defense Analyses in 1970 after the U.S. took the Vietnam War to Cambodia. PHS students went on strike for the same reason. Needing more dorm space, with coeducation a reality, the University closed the Princeton Inn on Alexander Street, and Renwicks said good-bye.

Early in the 70's, groups were formed to try to solve the drug problem after one Princeton youth died of a drug overdose, and another of methadone. There was discord and dissension at the Regional Schools; more than 1,400 parents signed a petition asking Superintendent Philip McPherson to resign.

On the other side of Nassau Street, under no pressure to do so, Robert Goheen resigned from the University and was replaced by William Bowen.

New Jersey courts said they would close all public schools in the state by July 1, 1976, unless the legislature found a more equitable way than property tax to finance the schools. It didn't, and the schools closed briefly. A state mediation board declared its impasse with the school board "insoluble" in 1975, and a year later Superintendent McPherson resigned. Paul Houston took his place in 1977.

"Old" News Sounds New

A problem Town Topics began to report in its first year — too few parking spaces in the central business district — got a suggested solution: an 800-car parking garage. The Planning Board rejected the idea, and then did what Princeton does best: appointed a committee to study the problem.

And as long as committees were being appointed, how about another to study consolidation. Voters approved a formation of a citizen's group to study this age-old topic, and the question was put to another referendum in 1979. It passed overwhelmingly in the Township and came up 33 votes short in the Borough.

To report all this news, Town Topics made the final transition to a tabloid newspaper, changing its format to a full front page. For

Continued on Next Page

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TT History

Continued from Preceding Page

the first time, the paper could put all important late-breaking news on its front page, and run more than one story there.

The Booming 1980's

In the 1980's Town Topics lost its other co-founder and Princeton lost forever its small town atmosphere. Don Stuart died of cancer in April 1981 at age 67. Not only had he not entertained any thoughts of retirement up to that point, but also had not missed a day of work due to illness since the paper began. He was replaced by his son, (Donald C. (Jeb) Stuart, III) who had been an assistant editor at the paper since June 1967.

Princeton saw significant changes, with the CBD undergoing a bigger transition than at any time since Palmer Square was built in the 1930's. The decade began with an overflow crowd at a Borough Council meeting in a futile attempt to "Save the Princeton Playhouse."

This elegant 43-year old movie house was being razed as part of plans to revitalize the Palmer Square area by Princeton University, major stockholder in Palmer Square, Inc. Months later the University sold its interests to Collins Development Corporation, which entered into a several-year long battle with Borough boards and citizens over its plans.

When Collins was through, the Nassau Inn's size had been greatly increased; a parking garage built; several stores, such as Skirm's Smoke Shop and the Book Mart, displaced by trendy new boutiques; and the Kiosk put in place. Meanwhile, the late Barbara Boggs Sigmund, Borough Mayor, was worried about the "bankification" of Nassau Street.

The winds of change swept along the Route One corridor as well with new shopping centers and office buildings springing up like weeds. Traffic on Nassau Street and other major arteries, which people had been calling unbearable for many years, became horrendous.

To make matters worse, the County shut down the Harrison Street bridge for four and a half years; various other Borough and Township roads were repaired; and the Nassau Street sidewalks and sewers were replaced after years of deterioration. The Province Line Road bridge over Stony Brook was simply closed and never reopened.

Borough and Township both wrestled with responses to new laws on affordable housing, stemming from the Mount Laurel case. Keeping open space became a priority, and the Mountain Lakes property was acquired. However, a great deal of open space went to housing developments in the Township — the Ettl Farm tract on Rosedale Road, as well as acreage on Pretty Brook, Drakes Corner and Cherry Hill roads. It all kept the Planning Board busy.

The end of the decade brought a great sadness to the Stuarts when Emily C. Stuart was murdered in her home on Mercer Street. Despite a lengthy police investigation, the person responsible has never been found.

There's Nothing Like Family

In 1988 Town Topics moved to its current printer, Webco Graphics in Lakewood. Now the paper is printed Tuesday night and trucked back to Princeton, arriving in the parking lot on Mercer Street at 5 a.m. Copies are distributed to news services for delivery around town, while others are labeled and sent to the post office for delivery Thursday morning.

When Jeb Stuart took over for his father, he lasted exactly eight months trying to do it all himself, and at the beginning of 1982 was joined by his wife, Sheila, who now shares the long hours associated with publishing a weekly newspaper.

Under her guidance in the 1980's, Town Topics, which previously employed computers only for typesetting, added others for billing and circulation. Later Sheila successfully oversaw the changeover from Compugraphic equipment to the much more versatile Apple Macintoshes, which with the help of scanners and laser printers produce all of the paper's advertising and editorial copy, some of it in full page layout.

Some have noticed, others not, the most recent change in Town Topics, which took effect a month ago. The old logo on the front page, which showed a picture taken of Palmer Square with the University's Holder Tower in the background, was updated with a newer picture shot from the roof of the Nassau Inn.

The old logo might still be there, but a year or so ago, our advertising manager, sealed its fate with the comment, "That picture looks like something out of Transylvania."

That one change provoked others, and a general re-design of the front page was accomplished (there have been two others since 1982). At the same time, the type font used inside the paper was changed to souvenir and increased in size. Headlines were made larger and bolder and weekly boxes like Current Cinema streamlined — making it all more readable.

Other changes may lie ahead, Sheila promises that as soon as she has the time, a classified program will be installed that will automatically *classify* the ads of all things. Town Topics' most beloved feature to some and most anachronistic to others may change.

One thing that won't change, however, is the effort and dedication it takes to put out a weekly newspaper. The key ingredient is employees — just 18, most of them part time plus a few free-lance writers — who, whether they stay one year or three-plus decades, care about what they do. Town Topics has been fortunate in its 50-year history in having a staff that cares deeply about publishing the best possible issue 52 weeks a year.

The deadline comes every Tuesday evening regardless of sickness or weather — and that includes blizzards. This paper has missed its deadline only once in 50 years: in the mid-50's when Don Stuart had no shot at driving 30 miles to Mount Holly during a huge snowstorm that closed the roads.

Not so in 1996 when the Blizzard of January 7 and 8 piled 20-plus inches of snow on Princeton. Governor Christie Whitman's State of Emergency edict kept all but essential traffic off the roads Monday, but those employees who lived in town walked to the Mercer Street office.

Enough was done by that skeleton staff that when everybody else returned on Tuesday, a 48-page paper (just four to eight pages less than a normal size) was distributed right on time Wednesday morning. It was a major accomplishment, even more so when you learn that Sheila and Jeb were biking the back roads of Argentina in sunny, 75-degree weather, blissfully unaware of the blizzard.

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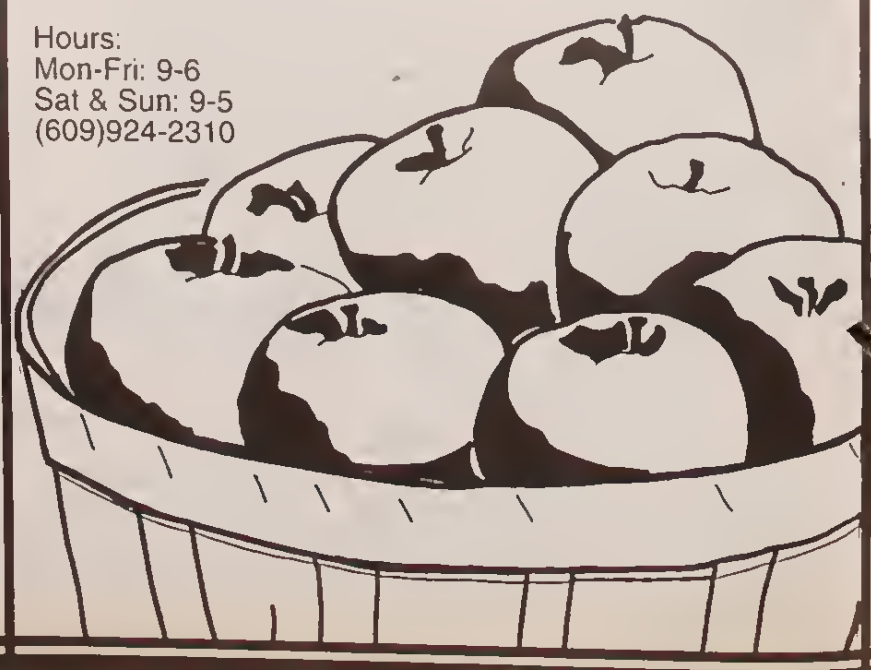

Princeton Defeats Cornell 27-0

(Reprinted from November 8, 1950)

You have to go back 15 years to find a situation comparable to the Princeton football picture today. But even in 1935, when the Tigers' last championship team was bowling over all its opponents, there was none of the delighted surprise that comes with a stunning upset of a traditional opponent.

It was, of course, the size of the 27-0 score over Cornell, and not the victory itself, that caused most of the pop-eyed amazement. The outcome does rank as an upset, in view of the pre-game ratings of the two teams, but it must be admitted that the players, the coaches and most of Princeton felt in advance that a Tiger triumph was likely.

As a result of their wholly convincing victory, the Tigers are now ninth in the nation in both the AP and UPI polls. Last week they were as far down as 22nd in the AP rating.

The 47,500 overflow crowd in Palmer Stadium Saturday saw a defensive performance rarely matched in Princeton gridiron history, as the powerful Red attack was held to 27 yards along the ground, never penetrating beyond the Nassau 24-yard line. It was only the Ithacans' third loss in their last 24 games.

Brad Glass, sophomore guard, led the array of slashing tacklers; others whose performance stood out on a day when every one of the victors played well were Hollie Donan, Tom Hennon, Joe Zawadsky, Dave Hickok, Frank Reichel and Dick Pivirotto. As a result of their great afternoon's work, the Tigers replaced Cornell as the team with the best defensive rushing record in the East.

Offensively, Dick Kazmaier took the statistical honors in a smoothly-functioning backfield that ran and passed for 356 yards behind eye-filling interference. Kaz racked up two touchdowns, one on a 70-yard sprint, accounted for 192 yards in all, and completed seven of nine passes.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF PRINCETON FOOTBALL: It wasn't a very big paper in 1949 and 1950, but Town Topics began to devote more and more space to covering the Princeton football team, one of the best in the nation in those days. The first picture it ever published was taken of coach Charlie Caldwell and 1949 team captain George Sella. *(Alan Richards photo)*

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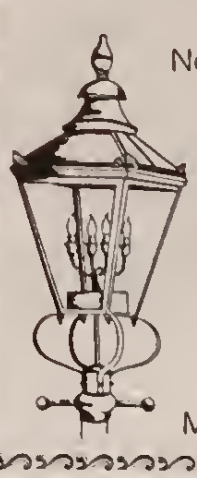

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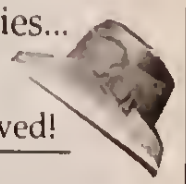

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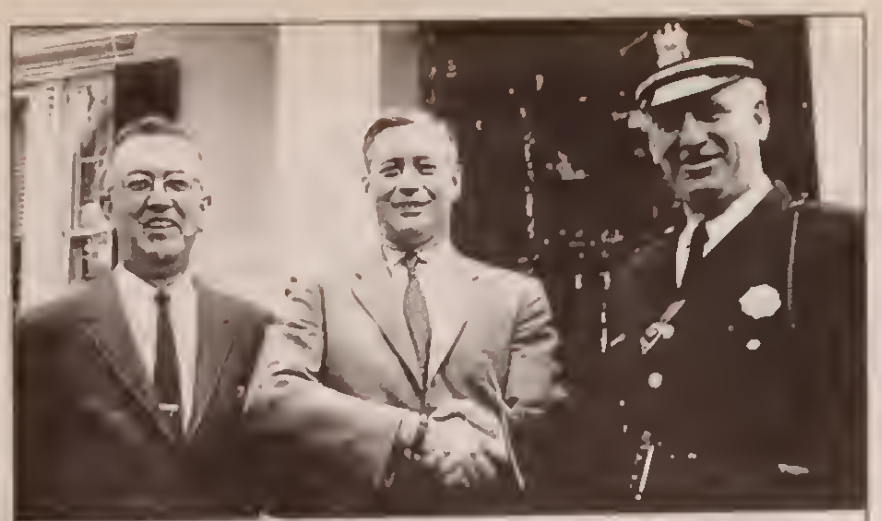

IRISHMEN ALL AT BOROUGH HALL: Publishing on St. Patrick's Day in 1967, Town Topics warned residents not to show up at Borough Hall without a bit of green on, or their lives wouldn't be worth a parking ticket. The powers that were in those days: Administrator Robert F. Mooney, Mayor Henry S. Patterson and Police Chief Peter J. McCrohan.

Better Traffic Control

(Reprinted from November 30, 1947)

The traffic lights at the corner of Nassau Street and University Place, discussed last week in this newspaper, were the subject of further comment at Tuesday's Borough Council meeting. Net result: a motion introduced by Mr. Karch, seconded by Mr. Griffing, that steps be taken immediately to restore the lights at the busy intersection to working order. Mr. Kopliner and Mr. Redding also backed the proposal, Mr. Briner was absent, and Mr. Voorhees voted against it.

Repair of the lights at this corner (at an estimated $5,000) will be undertaken by the State Highway Department, Mr. Voorhees reported, only if angle parking is replaced by parallel parking on the north side of Nassau Street.

A Highway Department survey of the town's business area favored such a move (1) to facilitate the flow of traffic through Princeton, (2) as a safety measure. Police Commissioner Voorhees based his stand against repairing the lights on the grounds that parallel parking would decrease by 26 the number of available spaces on the north side of Nassau Street and that the Highway Department had no business "dictating" Princeton's parking policies.

Surprising Statistics

(Reprinted from April 28, 1946)

A survey of opinion taken by *Town Topics* Tuesday night at the forum conducted under League of Women Voters auspices revealed several surprising points:

Only 19% of those polled in the room — ballots were distributed to all of the estimated 250 attending — were against consolidation of the Borough and Township. And only one out of three residents of the latter municipality who took part in the survey disapproved of the proposal.

Backing such a merger, the figures showed, were 68% of those who came to the Elementary School auditorium. Divided municipally, Townshipers were 49% for it, Borough residents 89% in agreement. About one in 10 expressed no opinion on the question.

More than half of those present (54%) felt that such a merger might be effected within the next decade. Oddest statistic of all culled from the balloting: Township residents were represented at the meeting virtually on a 50-50 basis with their Borough neighbors, far out of proportion to the actual one-three ratio in population.

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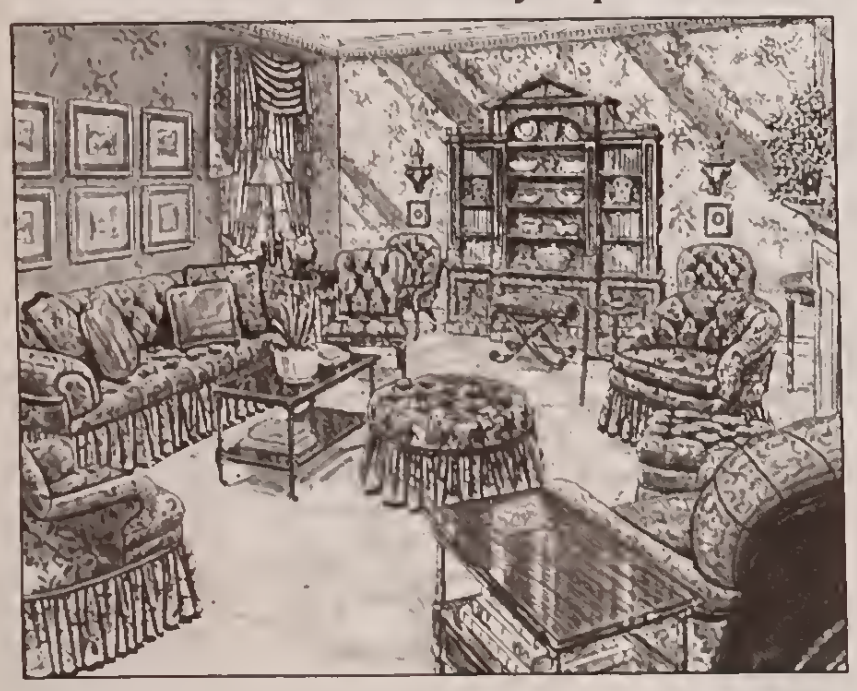

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We congratulate *Town Topics* for fifty years of reporting on life in Princeton.
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50 ★ Hats Off To Town Topics ★ 50

Photo by Matt Zarzecki

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU to Sheila and Jeb from your many friends and admirers for making sure we know our town inside and out, upside and down. . . fantastic family and frivolous friends indefatigably fanfared. . . brand new babies broadcasted . . . nursery school nonsense noted . . . kindergarten connections communicated . . . middle school maneuverings marveled . . . high school hijinks highlighted . . . athletic feats feted . . . home team excellence exalted . . . graduates grandly glorified . . . collegiate completions congratulated . . . engagements endearingly announced . . . marriages merrily marked . . . golf glories aggrandized . . . tennis tournaments touted . . . garden clubbers clouted . . . paddle play punctuated . . . pimpt planners pontificated . . . princeton pedalers personified . . . parking problems pondered . . . speedster specifics splashed . . . volunteerism vividly visualized . . . sports scores skillfully scanned . . shopping short-cuts shared . . . political positions puzzled . . . real estate reality revealed . . . memorable moments . . . Don editing *Town Topics* and writing the sports every Sunday while watching the baseball game, always bet his $1 on the National League with the caveat that, if it was Detroit, he got the American League . . . bets frozen at $5, the tradition continues . . . exciting escapades with Mardi & Georgie. . . stories that never made *Town Topics:* the Plymouth station wagon that flipped off the driveway on Galbreath Drive/who put the red and green jello in Mrs. T.'s bathtub? . . . classifieds, classy and classic . . . I do windows and baseboards and prepare hearty meals . . . is the bentwood rocker really sold? . . . the pigeons are circling . . . Encyclopedia Britannica for sale, cheap, wife now knows everything . . . t-bone . . . several middle aged women in the audience swooned . . . Jocinta . . . Splendor on the Delaware . . . Princeton Woodcock Society Annual Dinner . . . Whipsnot Pickney . . . the snow gives Princeton the bird . . . "Spokes" - What a pair of wheels . . . what do rent and a bottle of scotch have in common?. . . Wild World Photos . . . the perfect place to start a second career . . . Noe Pond, forgotten forever . . . Wow! This is steeper than The Great Road . . . subscriber benefits: one dollar refunds . . . fastest turnaround in town . . . football dinner winner? loser! . . ."Rosebud", it's not the last word, it's just the beginning . . .

We all look forward to fifty years more of (free) Town Topics at our door !!!

Reedo ❖ Amy ❖ Jay ❖ Landi ❖ Peter ❖ Trish ❖ Merry ❖ Bob ❖ Vince ❖ Jan ❖ Tom

Congratulations to

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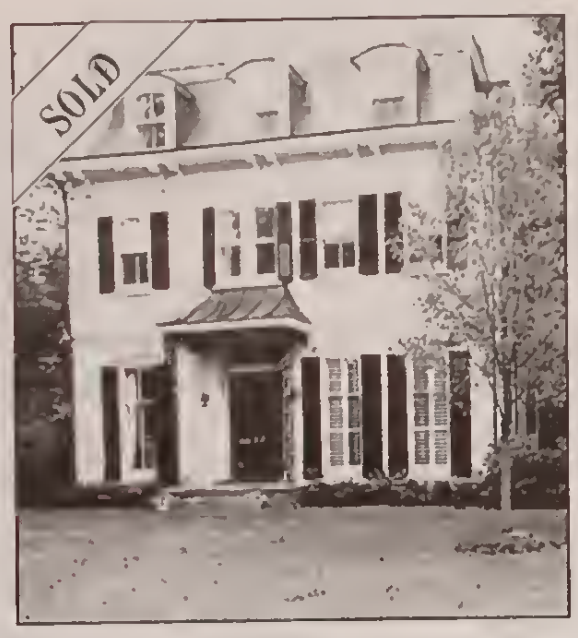

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